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DECIPHERING A TOOL OF IMPERIAL RULE

A Case Study of the Marriage Rituals of Imperial Princes during the Hongwu Reign (1368-1398)

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Thesis submitted for the degree of PhD

2016

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Abstract

This thesis analyses the changes in the marriage rituals of imperial princes applied during the founding reign of the Ming dynasty (Hongwu 1368-1398). With an ultimate ambition of deciphering the texts of institutionalised rituals, this thesis examines the patterns of, rationales for and influences behind the changes that were made. Similar to those from other periods, the texts of rituals produced during the Hongwu reign utilised terms and procedures that were derived from both the classics and ritual precedents. I contend that these terms and procedures form symbols of rituals. While, on one hand, the stability of these symbols themselves was key to maintaining the impression of the continuity of ritual, on the other hand, the contexts of the symbols were manipulated so as to implant significant innovations. Combining methodological approaches from textual studies, anthropology and history, this thesis investigates such innovations at different time points during the reign.

From the first year to the eighth year, the Hongwu emperor gradually seized the power over ritual from the Confucian officials. He then went on to implement his own version of ideal government and put efforts into both the civil and military aspects of government. The marriage rituals were a co-product of these two aspects. In particular, the symbols of state hierarchy such as imperial ancestral shrines and the conferment of the titles were adapted for the later versions of the marriage rituals so that the emperor could define the respective positions of his sons and their in-laws in the hybrid of his family and state. This thesis argues that changes to the meanings of the marriage rituals were connected with the emperor's developing strategies responding to the specific events in the political process. Furthermore, the Hongwu innovations provided the basis for the further ritual advancement of subsequent periods.

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Introduction

After fierce battles with the Mongolian Yuan government (Yuan dynasty 1271-1368) and other rivals, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398) ascended the throne in 1368. Zhu Yuanzhang, the founder of the Ming dynasty, decided to name his reign Hongwu (洪武 vastly martial). While carrying out the military campaigns for the consolidation and expansion of the newly founded dynasty he urged his government to construct and implant rituals at state level. “Before he had any time to [handle] other business, he first opened the two bureaus of ritual and music”.¹ In Hongwu 3 (1370) the Ming government defeated the former Yuan forces in Shanxi, and the Gansu corridor and “restored Chinese rule up to the Great Wall line for the first time since the early tenth century”.² In the same year the first comprehensive ritual work of the dynasty, the *Mingjili* 明集禮 (Collected Rituals of the Ming) was completed.³ Obviously the emperor regarded ritual as a weapon from the tradition of the ethnic Han to claim his own cultural orthodoxy and authority in contrast to the Mongolian rulers of the Yuan dynasty.⁴ The Hongwu government established a ritual institution that was

¹ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 47: 1223–1224: 他務未遑，首開禮、樂二局。

² Dreyer, “Military Origins of Ming China,” 102. For the sake of clarity, throughout the thesis the years of the Hongwu reign will be referred to in a simplified style, i.e. Hongwu N stands for the N-th year of the Hongwu reign. Furthermore, throughout the thesis the years of the Hongwu reign will be referred to in this style to better illustrate the progress in the reign. The corresponding year in the Gregorian calendar of a Hongwu year will also be given with its first appearance in each section.

³ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 47: 1223–1224. A comprehensive ritual work refers to a work that contains rituals under all categories. The version of the *Mingjili* used in the thesis is the *Siku Quanshu* (Shanghai guji chubanshe, 1987) edition.

⁴ The authority perspective can be seen from Farmer, “Social Regulations of the First Ming Emperor: Orthodoxy as a Function of Authority,” 107–111. For the efforts to distinguish between rituals of “cultural orthodoxy” as opposed to Mongolian customs see Zhang Jia, “Zaixu Yilun: Hongwu Shiqi de Hunsang Lisu Gaige.”

comparable to that of the earlier dynasties such as the Tang (618-907) and Song (960-1279) before its general absence in the Mongolian Yuan dynasty. The ritual institution not only continued throughout the Ming but was also adopted by its successor, the Manchu Qing (1644-1911), another dynasty ruled by non-Han emperors.⁵ Hence the Hongwu reign is normally noted as a period that restored the ritual institution.

However, a conflicting view of the reign is revealed by a close inspection of activities relating to the ritual institutions during the thirty-one years of the Hongwu reign. The first comprehensive ritual work *Mingjili* remained unpublished throughout the reign,⁶ whereas the government continued to compile and publish ritual works and protocols. The Hongwu government applied unprecedented changes in later works, which were widely circulated and greatly impacted on the subsequent periods.⁷ Therefore, although the reign was a crucial period for the continuity of the ritual institution in imperial China, significant innovations in the institution were also introduced and transmitted during the reign. This leaves a question regarding the extent to which the ritual institution could be considered as a “continuity”.

In modern research the general lack of clear differentiation of the facets of the ritual institution further blurred the image of the continuity and discontinuity of the ritual institution.⁸ There were at least three facets of ritual institution, the philosophy,

⁵ “Ritual institution” refers to the broad concept of *lizhi* 禮制, which includes all of the aspects of the rituals at state level, for example the philosophy, the bureaucracy and the rituals.

⁶ The *Mingjili* was not published until almost two centuries later. For details see Zhao Kesheng, “Da Mingjili de Chuxiu Yu Kanbu (The First Compilation and the Publication of Da Mingjili).”

⁷ For example in Hongwu 7 (1374) the government published *Xiaoci Lu* 孝慈錄 (Records of Filial Piety and Compassion), a code for mourning dress that deviated from the classics and precedents and was then adapted widely in the mourning practices in the Ming and Qing dynasties. For a detailed analysis see Inoue Tōru cho, *Chūgoku No Sōzoku to Kokka No Reisei : Sōhō Shugi No Shiten Kara No Bunseki*, 443–477.

⁸ In many of these works the research topic “ritual institutions” has covered official prescriptions, private prescriptions influential in society, ritual classics, ritual education and courtesies used in daily

the bureaucracy and the institutional rituals. Despite the existence of research focused on the developments of the philosophy and bureaucracy over different periods,⁹ research on rituals themselves were considered of little importance unless there was evidence of direct links to the first two facets. The changes made to rituals are usually explained as results of competitions within the first two facets, such as the intellectual competitions between scholars from different areas or schools, and power competitions between the emperor and Confucian officers or between factions of Confucian officers, or a combination of the above. In other words there is a stereotype of rituals as passive receiver of influences whereas their functions of active governing were either neglected or vaguely blended with the received influences.

The rituals have their own train of development: the rituals transmitted from the early dynasties formed a basis for those produced in the later dynasties. Zhu Yuanzhang, in particular, ordered his Confucian officers to “extensively study the transmitted prescriptions” in order to compile the rituals for people of different status

life. In these cases the term “ritual institution” has a general and vague definition rather than solely of the ritual institutions relevant to government, for example Yang Zhigang, *Zhongguo Liyi Zhidu Yanjiu*.

⁹ Philosophy for ritual of governance has been studied from wide angles, such as that of particular philosopher or philosophers, See for example Sato, *The Confucian Quest for Order: The Origin and Formation of the Political Thought of Xun Zi*. There are also studies on how the philosophy was applied in institutions and even used in formalising politic strategies, for example Gan Huaizhen suggested two different philosophies of making ritual institution as a method of civilization or showing prestige in order to enhance the hierarchical relationship of emperor and his ministers. Gan Huaizhen, *Huangquan Liyi Yu Jingdian Quanshi*. The research on the bureaucracy often involve some aspects of institutional rituals: the evolution of the bureaucracy with direct responsibility over the institutional rituals, e.g. Zhang Wenchang investigated the main responsibilities and duties of the bureaucracy for ritual institution from the Jin (265-420) which facilitated the completion of the first comprehensive set of ritual prescriptions and the development of the bureaucracy up to the end of the Southern and Northern dynasties (end of 6th century), Zhang Wenchang, “Zhongguo Lidian Chuantong Xingcheng Yu Zhiguan Zhineng Yanbian Zhiguanxi --- Yi Wei Jin Nan Bei Chao Wei Tansuo Zhongxin.” As for the examination of the framework, function and reception of ritual prescriptions in the bureaucratic see e.g., Tang dynasty (618-907) in McMullen, “Bureaucrats and Cosmology: The Ritual Code of T’ang China.”

from top to the bottom of the state.¹⁰ Furthermore, although the emperor relied on Confucian scholars during the first decade of the reign, he began to seize the power over institutionalised rituals from these Confucian scholars. The first evidence that the emperor became confident enough to interfere in the details of rituals can be seen in the production of the mourning code *Xiaoci Lu* 孝慈錄 (Records of Filial Piety and Compassion) in Hongwu 7 (1374). The emperor dismissed the original proposal by his Minister of Rites who quoted ritual classics and, instead, decreed an investigation into the practices of previous dynasties. The outcome was then further revised by the emperor before its publication in the work of the *Xiaoci Lu*.¹¹ By Hongwu 10 (1377) the emperor dominated the practice of the most important rituals including the sacrifices to the imperial ancestors, the Heaven and Earth, and the Soil and Grain.¹² In the same year the Confucian scholars who had assisted in the founding of dynasty such as Liu Ji 劉基 (1311-1375) and Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381) were either dead or had already departed from their official posts. In Hongwu 13 (1380) the abolition of the highest civil office (i.e. the office of the grand councillor) left the Ministry of Rites under the direct control of the emperor.¹³

In the second half of the Hongwu reign the publication of ritual prescriptions still continued, though some of these were revised versions of the early prescriptions. The latter revisions were partly in response to actual ritual practice earlier in the reign.

¹⁰ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 14:176: 歷考舊章.

¹¹ This event is recorded in *Ibid.*, 94:1361. See also, Inoue Tōru cho, *Chūgoku No Sōzoku to Kokka No Reisei : Sōhō Shugi No Shiten Kara No Bunseki*, 443–477.

¹² See Zhao Kesheng, “Hongwu Shinian Qianhou de Jili Gaizhi Chutan: Yi Jiao, Miao, Sheji Wei Zhongxin.”

¹³ See Ho, “The Organization and Functions of the Ministry of Rites in the Early Ming Period (1368-1398).”

For example in the case of the imperial princes' marriage rituals, the set of prescriptions published in Hongwu 26 (1393) was based on the ritual practice for the Prince of Qin's marriage in Hongwu 8 (1375) with further modifications.¹⁴ Nevertheless the prescriptions could also be revised without being first practised. One example is the aforementioned Hongwu 26 set of prescriptions for imperial princes' marriage rituals. The government issued another set of prescriptions in Hongwu 27 (1376) before any imperial princes got married (i.e. before there were any opportunities for the Hongwu 26 prescriptions to be practised).¹⁵ Thus there were several developmental stages for the marriage rituals of imperial princes during the Hongwu reign. An advanced understanding of developments in the rituals during Hongwu reign is a pre-requisite to judge the nature of the reign in the history of the ritual institution of imperial China.

No records or comments have been found explaining the rationale behind the revisions. Furthermore, the exact authorship of the prescriptions and the practices of the rituals are unknown – they were either anonymous or attributed to the representatives of a large group of collaborating compilers of a massive work incorporating many other subjects, such as the *Mingjili*. Normally these cases are considered as unsolvable if the identities of the compilers of the rituals are unrecoverable – in other words the only way to understand rituals seems to lie in the biographical information of the compilers. However, the institutional rituals are not

¹⁴ This thesis mainly used the *Huang Ming Zhishu* edition (Koten Kenkukai, 1966-1967) of the *Zhusi Zhizhang* 諸司職掌 (Handbook of Government Posts) for Hongwu 26 prescriptions; besides there are also the *Xuanlantang Congshu* edition 玄覽堂叢書 (Shanghai: Xuanlanjushi, 1940) and one edition recorded in the *Veritable Records (Ming Taizu Shilu, 224:3279–3293.)*. No significant difference was found between the three editions. The practice in Hongwu 8 is recorded in *Ibid.*, 102:1717–1720.

¹⁵ The time and content of the Hongwu 27 prescriptions are recorded in *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 233: 3405–3409. This thesis also consulted the prescriptions in the *Zhengde (Siku Quanshu)* and *Wanli Huidian* (Dongnan shubanshe edition, 1963).

like personal works, the production and revisions to them would not be initiated solely by people whose personal identities were not significant enough to be recorded. Despite this it was not uncommon for the institutionalised rituals to be produced or revised without exact information of compilers being given in the Hongwu reign. Under such circumstance it is worth questioning and testing the rather vague impression of the overwhelming importance of the unidentifiable compilers of the institutionalised rituals. It is particularly important to elucidate and re-evaluate the consequence of this impression, i.e. the hidden assumption that without compilers' identities little comprehensible information can be retrieved from the mass of the well preserved rituals.

This thesis presents an attempt to decipher the changes applied to the marriage rituals for imperial princes at each stage of the Hongwu reign from a more neglected but fundamental perspective, i.e. the development of the rituals. In a broad sense all versions of the same type of ritual belong to the same train of development: they all contain terms and procedures originating from the ritual classics and precedents from earlier dynasties. These terms and procedures form the symbols of the rituals. Any version of the ritual was constructed by combining the selected symbols from the classics and precedents and the innovations of the time, and ultimately the constructed versions ought to serve certain functions. In our case the ritual was always for the marriages of the imperial princes. The analysis takes the angle that the marriage ritual is a rite of passage which overlays social order upon the natural process of the life. This concept borrowed from anthropology enables us to consider the ritual as a synthesis of symbols concerning the relationships between the marriage parties. No matter where the symbols, their uses and interpretations had originated they were all integrated to form a coherent version of the ritual.

Centred on the concept of the “rite of passage” the research will extend in two directions: on the one hand in the textual tradition to examine how the Hongwu government applied innovations to the symbols originating from classics and precedents; and on the other hand to investigate the relations between the marriage parties in reality, especially the political order between the imperial princes and their in-laws during the reign. From a bird’s eye view the changes to the rituals are seen as innovations in the symbols and their uses. Then the corresponding modifications in the symbolic meanings of the marriage ritual are examined as adjustments to the social order influenced by the marriage. Finally the adjusted symbolic meanings regarding the relationships between the marriage parties are contextualised with an exploration of the actual positions of the marriage parties in the state, with reference to the relevant political events at the time. Thus the manipulations of the symbols in the ritual are connected to the dynamics in the political process through the analysis of the modified relationships between the marriage parties. When studying the developments in the ritual this thesis takes into consideration both the recorded practice and the prescriptions. Although both are textualised rituals which may not faithfully reflect the developments in the actual practices, the impression of continuity in the institutionalised rituals was greatly influenced by the repetitive symbols in these textualised rituals. Thus this thesis will study the revisions to the textualised ritual which can provide a direct insight into the conflicting images of continuity and discontinuity. The research will be conducted in three levels of text, ritual and political strategy and reality. The background and detailed accounts of the research at each level are provided in the following sections.

TEXTUAL COMPARISON FOR DELINEATING THE LAYERS OF
THE HONGWU REIGN

The Hongwu government presented their rituals as a part of a continuous cultural heritage through the symbols from ritual classics and precedents.¹⁶ The main detailed reference point for the procedure of marriage ritual is the classic *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Ceremonies) which defines guidelines for the *shi* 士 (ordinary officers).¹⁷ It has been a persistent habit which even exists today to emphasize the long transmission of the prototype of the marriage ritual. In particular the so-called “six rites” (*liuli* 六禮) of the marriage ritual, i.e. the submission of the choice, asking the [woman’s] name, submission of the auspicious [result], submission of the proof, requesting the [wedding] date and [the groom’s] welcoming [the bride] in person.¹⁸ These six rites are only a part of the marriage ritual that takes place before the woman’s arrival at man’s family, but they are widely accepted as the norm of marriage rituals in various references. For example it was quite common for the local gazetteers to use the “six rites” to assess local practices.¹⁹ In some literary works the term “six rites” was used as a substitute term of the “marriage ritual”.²⁰ It was a popular belief lasting into the Republican

¹⁶ The ritual classics refer to the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Rites of Zhou), the *Liji* 禮記 (Record of Rituals) and the *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Ceremonies). See Boltz, “Chou Li,” 24–32. Boltz, “I Li,” 234–243. Riegel, “Li Chi,” 293–297.

¹⁷ *Yili Zhushu*, 4–6: 45–69.

¹⁸ The six rites are 納采, 問名, 納吉, 納徵, 請期, 親迎 in Chinese.

¹⁹ For example *Yongpingfu fengsu kao* 永平府風俗考 (Report on the Customs of Prefecture of Yongping) and *Baodingfu fengsu kao* 保定府風俗考 (Report on the Customs of Prefecture of Baoding) in “*Fangyu huibian zhifangdian*” 方輿彙編職方典 (Geography, Political Divisions) of *Gujin Tushu Jicheng*, 61: 591–594; 72: 792–793.

²⁰ For example in “*Li Wa Zhuan*” 李娃傳 (Tale of Li Wa) by Bai Xingjian 白行簡 (c 776–826), Li Fang, *Taiping Guangji*, 484: 3991.

period (1912-1949) that the protocol of “the six rites” emerged from the practices of the Zhou dynasty (1045-221BC).²¹ Recent research has argued that there may not have been a unified application of the “six rites” in all the vassal states of Zhou, suggesting that the “six rites” might have begun to spread widely during the Han dynasty (206BC -220AD) when the ritual classics were reconstructed.²²

Through textual comparison, a clear, but previously neglected distinction becomes observable between the references to the six rites as individually enumerated rites and the term “six rites” which reflects a collective concept. The latter could have been centuries later than the former. It is evident that four out of the six rites existed in the classic *Chunqiu* 春秋 (Spring and Autumn). Yet the six rites are never found together as a set nor did the term “six rites” appear in the original text.²³ In the ritual classics there are two sections focusing on the marriage ritual, the “shihunli” 士昏禮 (marriage rituals for ordinary officers) in the *Yili* and “hunyi” 昏義 (meaning of the marriage ritual) in the *Liji*. In both of the texts the first five rites are all addressed by their terms whereas the last rite was only narrated without referring to the specific term (“the welcome in person”).²⁴ Furthermore the term “six rites” is found in neither the

²¹ For example: the long existence of the norm of the marriage ritual as “six rites” was suggested by in the Tang work: Du You, *Tongdian*, 58:1633. Republican research like in Chen Guyuan, *Zhongguo Hunyinshi*, 151–152.

²² Chen Dongyuan, *Zhongguo Funü Shenghuoshi*, 24.

²³ In the record for the twenty-second year of Duke Zhuang, in *Guliangzhuan* (穀梁傳) it listed submission of the choice, asking the name, submission of the proof and notifying the date and says: “[the marriage ritual] has all four procedures [rites]” (四者備). *Chunqiu Gongyangzhuan Zhushu*, 6:58[3b]. For the same record in *Zuozhuan* it only mentions welcome in person and submission of the valuable gifts. *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Zhushu*, 9:162[22b]. Yang Bojun commented that “[it is] not certain that whether the rest of [rites] is the same as the *shihunli* or not” (餘數者不知同於士昏禮否) in Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Zhu*, 219–220.

²⁴ The term welcome in person only appeared in the appendix of “shi hunli” in the *Yili*. Also it appears in other sections of the original text of the *Liji* without being a part of the six rites (e.g. *Liji Zhushu*,

original texts of the two sections nor the principle commentary to these sections by the Han scholar Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200). In fact the term “six rites” appears only in the accounts of the sub-commentators who lived after the 6th century as the norm for marriage ritual. In the standard histories the emergence of the term “six rites” also suggests a similar timing of the development. According to the *Hanshu* 漢書 (History of the Han), the marriage ritual of Emperor Ping (漢平帝 9BC-6AD, r. 1BC-6AD) was designed only after the submission of the choice.²⁵ In this case instead of belonging to the set of six rites, the submission of the choice was treated as a rite more isolated from the rest of the marriage ritual. In the *Hou Hanshu* 後漢書 (History of later Han), the arrangement of the marriage ritual for emperor Huan (漢桓帝 132-168, r. 146-168) was outlined as the following: “the [use of] the wild goose, jade disks, horses and bunches of silks in the submission of the choice, were all according to [what was defined] in the old classics.”²⁶ In other word the “six rites” was still not established as a norm to refer to the marriage rituals from the classics in the eyes of the author Fan Ye 范曄 (398-445). The term “six rites” is first seen associated with the marriage ritual in the *Songshu* 宋書 (History of [Liu] Song) compiled at the end of the 5th century.²⁷ This association then flourished in the standard histories complied

26: 506. The point here is not to deny the existence of the rite or the term, but to argue the existence of the collectiveness of the six rites.

²⁵ Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 12: 355.

²⁶ Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 10: 443: 納采鴈璧乘馬束帛.

²⁷ First in the compilation of the work rather than the period covered. The details about the compilation of the standard history see Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A Manual*, 493–495.

during and after the Tang dynasty where the “six rites” was regarded as a norm of the marriage ritual.²⁸

The above example shows how the “six rites” as a collective concept was accepted as a norm of the marriage ritual centuries later than the occurrences of six rites as individual rite in the texts based on the classical texts transmitted from the Zhou and the Han. The layers of derivatives from the classical texts laid by later generations of scholars blurred the originality of their own contributions. Through and only through the textual comparison can the layers of derivatives be distinguished from their points of references (ritual classics) as well as earlier layers (precedents and commentaries). At the level of the text the innovations in symbols during the Hongwu reign will be differentiated from their definitions in the ritual classics and their later developments in the layers of precedents. Furthermore a text based comparison is also a way to avoid the interpretation of the Hongwu rituals based on the modern perception of the symbols that was influenced by their developments after the Hongwu reign. In such a way I will be able to delineate the Hongwu innovations as layers of the ritual between the precedents and their successors. This delineation will assist with my further probing into the innovated symbolic meanings of the ritual introduced in the reign and its wider relevance for governance.

The points of references for all ritual works are the ritual classics reconstructed in the Han dynasty, especially the versions with primary commentaries from the scholar Zheng Xuan. Besides the ritual classics, the governments of different periods

²⁸ To list some: the marriage ritual of emperor Xiaowu of Jin (362-396) in Fang Xuanling, *Jinshu*, 21: 668. The section on marriage ritual in the *Jiu Tangshu* (舊唐書 Old History of Tang), *Songshi* (宋史 History of Song) and *Mingshi* (明史 History of Ming). Liu Xu, *Jiu Tangshu*, 21:817. Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 111:2656. Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 31:1401.

laid their own contributions by producing ritual works, mainly as official prescriptions. The activity of compilation of governmental ritual works can be traced back to the Western Han when Shusun Tong 叔孫通 (?-c 194BC) composed a scheme for court rituals for the emperor.²⁹ In the Later Han, as an admirer of Shusun Tong's work, Cao Bao 曹褒 (?-102AD) compiled "regulations for [rituals of] capping, marriage, and the auspicious and ill-omened, endings and beginnings of life graded from the son of heaven down to the commoners".³⁰ These activities are recorded in the biography of Shusun Tong and Cao Bao in standard histories, however their works are not included in the bibliographical chapters. In fact their works are likely to have been lost at an early age.

The commonly acknowledged first set of the comprehensive official prescriptions was from the Jin dynasty (265-420), compiled by a group of the ministers headed by Xun Yi 荀顗 (?-274). A framework of five [categories of] rituals (*wuli* 五禮, i.e. auspicious, ill-omened, military, guest and joyful rituals) was developed in this work which provided a model for the organization and categorization of the rituals for later governmental ritual works.³¹ After the re-unification of the empire under the Sui dynasty (589-618), a governmental ritual work was made based on the selections of the rituals from the Liang (502-557) and the Northern Qi (550-577).³² In the early Tang

²⁹ Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 39:2722.

³⁰ Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 35:1203: 撰次天子至於庶人冠婚吉凶終始制度.

³¹ Xun's biography and the five categories in Fang Xuanling, *Jinshu*, 39: 1150-115, 119: 581. The term of five rituals also appears in the *Hanshu* as: "the sages compiled the five rituals upon the orders of Heaven" (聖人因天秩而制五禮). However no evidence shows whether the five categories was the original concept in the Han dynasty or not. Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 23:1079. The framework of the five categories was widely adapted by the Southern and Northern dynasties (420-589) and the subsequent dynasties.

³² Wei Zheng, *Suishu*, 6:105-106.

dynasty (618-907) the *Zhenguan Li* 貞觀禮 (Rituals of Zhenguan [reign 627-649]) and *Xianqing Li* 顯慶禮 (Rituals of Xianqing [reign 656-661]) were produced.³³ At the point when the Tang dynasty reached its highest prosperity, the *Kaiyuan Li* 開元禮 (Rituals of Kaiyuan [reign 713-741]) was issued in 732 in 150 *juan*. Scholars from the Song dynasty considered the *Kaiyuan Li* a great success, e.g. Ouyang Xiu 歐陽修 (1007-1072) commented:

Later generations used it, and though minor additions and deletions were applied from time to time, [those produced in the later generations] cannot surpass [it].

後世用之，雖時小有損益，不能過也。³⁴

The *Kaiyuan Li* is generally recognized as a milestone that consolidated the government ritual works before it and served as a base for the later ones. Furthermore, it is also the earliest extant official ritual prescriptions.

The *Kaiyuan Li* was still widely circulated and studied during the Song dynasty.³⁵ According to Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130 -1200) the first set of official prescriptions of the Song dynasty, the now lost *Kaibao Tongli* 開寶通禮 (The Complete Rituals of Kaibao [reign 968 -976]), was almost identical to the *Kaiyuan Li*.³⁶ There were more visible changes in the later sets of prescriptions of

³³ Du You, *Tongdian*, 41:1121. Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 11:307.

³⁴ Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 11:309.

³⁵ Zhao Lan, “*Da Tang Kaiyuan Li Chu Tan*,” 92.

³⁶ Zhu Xi, *Zhuzi Yulei*, 84: 2883. Presumably Zhu Xi’s comments were from his contacts with both works since the *Kaibao tongli* survived at least up to the early Yuan dynasty and recorded in Ma Duanlin, *Wenxian Tongkao*, 185:1597.

the Song, for example the *Taichang Yingel Li* 太常因革禮 (Received and Reformed Rituals of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices) in the Jiayou 嘉祐 reign (1056-1063) and the *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi* 政和五禮新儀 (New Etiquettes for the Five Rituals of Zhenghe [reign 1111-1118]) completed in 1113.³⁷ The latter, *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi*, had been published all over the state. Possibly because of this, though it had only been in use for a short period, Qing scholars considered it the only available comprehensive set of ritual prescriptions transmitted from the Northern Song.³⁸ Around the end of the 12th century the Southern Song produced the *Zhongxing Lishu* 中興禮書 (Book of Rituals of Resurgence) which was not widely circulated until several centuries later in the Ming dynasty.³⁹ The Yuan government only made efforts to compile guidelines for some court etiquette while all the rest of the rituals followed Mongolian customs.⁴⁰ In the collected statutes *Tongzhi Tiaoge* 通制條格 (Legislative Articles from the *Comprehensive Regulations*), *Jiali* 家禮 (Family Rituals) were specified for ethnic Chinese people for rituals such as marriage.⁴¹

After the founding of the Ming dynasty, Zhu Yuanzhang assigned two groups of compilers to the first ritual work, the *Mingjili*. The first group consisted of officials

³⁷ Ouyang Xiu and Su Xun, *Taichang Yingel Li*, juan 84–85. Zheng Juzhong, *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi*, juan 150–155.

³⁸ The *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi* was abolished just a couple of years later in the early Xuanhe period (1119-1125). Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 98: 2423. *Siku Quanshu* included it because the other ritual works from the Northern Song were thought to be lost. Yongrong, *Siku Quanshu Zongmu*, 82: 702.

³⁹ Shi Guangchao, “Zhongxing Lishu Ji Xubian Banben Kaoshu,” 85–90.

⁴⁰ Song Lian, *Yuanshi*, 67: 1663–1664.

⁴¹ Baizhu, *Tongzhi Tiaoge* (Legislative Articles from the *Comprehensive Regulations*), 787:3:671–672[12a–12b]. *Tongzhi Tiaoge* was itself a fragment of the collected statutes of Yuan dynasty. Li Yunian, “Yuandai Falü Tixi Zhi Goujian - Yuandai Falü Zucheng Jiexi,” 38–44.

who had long been associated with the government and held high positions, for example Li Shanchang 李善長 (1314-1390) and Song Lian.⁴² However, the *Mingjili* was attributed to the head of the other group who were scholars recruited especially for this particular work, that is, the scholar Xu Yikui 徐一夔 (1319-c 1400) who had broad knowledge of the classics and declined an official post after the completion of the *Mingjili*.⁴³ The *Mingjili* was kept in the imperial archive and was first published almost two centuries later in the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign (1522-1566).⁴⁴

In the middle and late Ming period, official ritual prescriptions were detailed in the *Da Ming Huidian* 大明會典 (Collected Statutes of the Great Ming). The *Da Ming Huidian* was actually an update of a work from the late Hongwu reign, the *Zhusi Zhizhang* 諸司職掌 (Handbook of Government Posts).⁴⁵ The *Zhusi Zhizhang* was published in Hongwu 26 (1393) and attributed to the Minister of Personnel, Zhai Shan 翟善 (?).⁴⁶ It was structured according to its contemporary bureaucratic framework, by being divided into the Six Ministries (*Liubu* 六部), the Censorate (*Duchayuan* 都察院), Office of Transmission (*Tongzhengsi* 通政司), Court of Judicial Review (*Dalisi* 大理寺) and the Five Chief Military Commissions (*Wujun Dudufu* 五軍都督府). According to the *Mingshi* 明史 (History of the Ming), the *Zhusi Zhizhang* was

⁴² Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 128:3784.

⁴³ Biography of Xu in Ibid., 285: 7322. Goodrich and Fang, *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368-1644*, 589-590.

⁴⁴ Zhao Kesheng, “*Da Mingjili de Chuxiu Yu Kanbu*,” 65.

⁴⁵ See preface in [*Zhengde*] *Ming Huidian*, 617[1a-2b].

⁴⁶ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 97: 2393.

An imitation [of] the *Tang Liudian* (Compendium of Administrative Law of the Six Divisions of the Tang Bureaucracy), [of which the content] arranged the official posts and divided the duties for the bureaus under the Five Commissions, Six Ministries and the Censorate.

倣唐六典，自五府、六部、都察院以下諸司設官分職。⁴⁷

The *Tang Liudian*, however, was a collection of administrative law issued in parallel with its contemporary prescriptions, i.e. the *Kaiyuan Li*.⁴⁸ Under the entry of the Ministry of Rites (*Libu* 禮部) of the *Tang Liudian*, the framework of the five rituals was introduced as no more than a list of rituals.⁴⁹ More detailed prescriptions such as the instructions on preparations and procedures of the rituals were included in the *Kaiyuan Li*.⁵⁰ In contrast detailed prescriptions were included in the entry on the Ministry of Rites of the *Zhusi Zhizhang* produced in the Hongwu reign. The *Da Ming Huidian*, as a development and expansion of *Zhusi Zhizhang*, inherited this feature and had detailed prescriptions for an even wider range of rituals. In other words, the publishing of the *Zhusi Zhizhang* in Hongwu 26 actually marked a turning point when official ritual prescriptions formally merged into the collection of administrative law. This arrangement was similar to and probably inspired by the inclusion of the regulations of marriage ritual under the Yuan dynasty *Tongzhi Tiaoge*. Again the

⁴⁷ Ibid., 138: 3964.

⁴⁸ Wilkinson, *Chinese History: A Manual*, 548.

⁴⁹ Li Linfu, *Tang Liudian*, 111–112.

⁵⁰ Liu Xu, *Jiu Tangshu*, 21: 818–819.

understanding of the developments in rituals during the Hongwu reign would be a pre-requisite to fully interpret this transition in the genres of works that contained detailed prescriptions. This thesis will trace the detailed changes in the marriage ritual for imperial princes in the prescriptions of the *Mingjili*, the *Zhusi Zhizhang*, and the practices in the *Ming Taizu Shilu* 明太祖實錄 (*Veritable Records of Ming Taizu*). Selected symbols in the above Hongwu rituals will be compared to the classics and the precedents, in particular the Tang *Kaiyuan Li* and the Song *Zhenghe Li* in order to extract the innovations in the uses of the symbols.

RITUAL (*li* 禮) AND ORDER

The definition for the term of ritual (*li* 禮) is broad in early Chinese texts. On one hand it can refer to the acts performed in service of a god.⁵¹ On the other hand it can be regarded as something (e.g. rules, regulations, etc.) to be relied on,⁵² or to put things in order.⁵³ The vague and broad term *li* is in fact a result of its evolution during the pre-Qin period (pre-221BC). The term *li* was used at least as early as the Shang dynasty (1600-1046 BC) when it denoted names of rituals and libations. Up to the middle of the Spring and Autumn period (770-476 BC), *li* began to be used to indicate manner and social norms. While at the end of this period, the early Confucians

⁵¹ *Shuowen Jiezi* glossed *li* as *lǚ* (shoe) and further explained *li* as “what is to serve a god and to gain fortune.” (所以事神致福也). Xu Shen and Duan Yucai, *Shuowen Jiezi Zhu*, 1a: 2.

⁵² Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735-1815) commented that “the shoes are what the feet depend on, [the meaning of this character can be] expanded to refer to all on which things depend on” (履，足所依也。引伸之凡所依皆曰履). Ibid., 2.

⁵³ *Shi Ming* 釋名 (Explanation of Words) glossed *li* as *ti* 體 (body), with a further explanation as “those which get substance of matters” (得其事體也). It also glossed substance (*ti*) as *di* 第 (order) and further explained *ti* as “bone, flesh, hair, blood, [from] the surface [to] the inside, [from] big [to] small [following] each other in order” (骨肉毛血表裏大小相次第也”) in Liu Xi, *Shi Ming*, 4:25a,2:12b.

considered *li* to be something associated with policy implementations. From the early to middle Warring States period (476-221BC), the psychological aspect of *li* as a moral value was explored. At the end of the period *li* was seen as a manifestation of the Way (*dao* 道) so that the term *li* became representative of the order of the natural, social and psychological worlds.⁵⁴

The expansion of the concept of the *li* during the Warring States period influenced the formation of thoughts in the *Xunzi* 荀子 (Master Xun). The *Xunzi* in turn laid the foundations of the political institutions and social theories of the Han dynasty providing a basic political-social model for the following dynasties. The wide range of concepts that the term *li* covers in Chinese history makes it a challenge for later scholars to find a term corresponding to *li* in Western languages. Proposals such as “propriety”, “rules of proper conduction” has been made. Until the last couple of decades the dominant translation of *li* has been ritual, although in a traditional account of Chinese studies, ritual is considered as a narrower concept in comparison with *li*.⁵⁵

The definition of the term “ritual” itself also met with difficulty in scholarship. The dispute has centred on the criteria used to determine whether a given activity is a ritual: should a definition be more concerned with the activity’s purpose or its functionality, its formality or its transcendence, its usage of symbolic actions or its usage of expressions? Study on the subject of ritual has a wide spectrum of perspectives, from interpretations of ritual to its essential nature, to understanding of the role of ritual in social organisation, and considering ritual as a form of cultural

⁵⁴Sato, *The Confucian Quest for Order: The Origin and Formation of the Political Thought of Xun Zi*, 234–235.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 166–167.

communication.⁵⁶ In addition the association between ritual and order has been more and more explored in different disciplines. In the field of anthropology of religion, rituals have been dealt with as a subject and are seen in close association with the beliefs that underline them.⁵⁷ Roy A. Rappaport coined the term “liturgical order” to refer to rituals and sequences of rituals. He argued that “[the orders of liturgy] proclaimed an order that transcends time, an ultimate or absolute order of which the temporal order is merely a contingent”.⁵⁸ He also suggested that the role of ritual is “to establish collective acceptance of fundamental postulates so that orderly social life can proceed as if there were in fact ultimate and absolute truths”.⁵⁹ The close relevance of the ritual and order was noticed by the ruling classes in many cultures and rituals were deployed by rulers as a means of ordering their own territories. The significance of the ritual in the ruler’s political life is studied by scholars with terms like “rite of royalty” or “ritual of royalty”.⁶⁰ In the last two decades of scholarship, the understanding of ritual within the history of politics has diverted from a concrete, isolated entity to a situated behaviour with a dynamic quality.⁶¹

Apart from the two types of the order, “the transcendent order” of religions and the political order imposed by ruling elites, another type of order - a perhaps more essential one - is manifested in rituals like marriage. Rituals such as baptism, coming-

⁵⁶ A survey of major theoretical perspectives of ritual studies can be found in Bell, *Ritual: Perspectives and Dimensions*, 89.

⁵⁷ Bowie, *The Anthropology of Religion: An Introduction*, 142.

⁵⁸ Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity*, 169,382.

⁵⁹ Paul, “The Social Act Basic to Humanity Review: Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity by Roy A. Rappaport,” 525.

⁶⁰ Cannadine, “Introduction,” 1–19.

⁶¹ Burden, “Rituals of Royalty: Prescription, Politics and Practices in English Coronation and Royal Funeral Rituals,” 1–2.

of-age initiation, marriage and funerals are also referred to “life-cycle” rites. The concept of “rite of passage” was coined by Arnold van Gennep and further explored by Victor Turner, who postulated a basic toolset for the structural analysis of rites. Van Gennep considered the life of an individual as “a series of passages from one age to another and from one occupation to another”.⁶² In his explanation the essential purpose of the rites of passage is to “enable the individual to pass from one defined position to another which is equally well defined”.⁶³ In such a definition the rites of passage overlay social order upon the biological order of human beings. Victor Turner deliberated on the intervening phase, where he used the term “liminal” (*limen*, threshold in Latin) to correspond to the “transition” phase. In Turner’s definition, during the liminal period in a marriage ritual the characteristics of the couple are ambiguous, while the period before it signifies the detachment of the couple from an earlier status in the hierarchy and the period after it places the couple in another clearly defined status in the hierarchy.⁶⁴ The concept of rite of passage and the toolset enable the structural analysis of the changes in the social relationship involved in the “rites of passage”.

In the Chinese case the ritual classics already explicitly assigned social relationships to marriage ritual, e.g. in the *Liji* 禮記 (Record of Rituals) the section “hunyi” 昏義 (the meaning of marriage) reads:

⁶² Van Gennep, *The Rites of Passage*, 2.

⁶³ Ibid., 3.

⁶⁴ Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure*, 94–95.

Marriage ritual [...] is the means to serve the ancestral temple above and down to [maintain] the continuity of later generations; therefore gentlemen pay great attention to it.⁶⁵

昏禮者上以事宗廟，而下以繼後世也，故君子重之。

The relevance of marriage ritual to political hierarchy has also been explained,

[The marriage ritual is] the means by which [to] differentiate between male and female, in order to establish the righteous relationship between husband and wife. [Once between] male and female there is [a] differentiation, then [between] husband and wife there is [a] righteous [relationship]; [Once between] husband and wife there is [a] righteous [relationship] and then between father and son there is [an] intimate [relationship]; [Once between] father and son there is [an] intimate [relationship], and then between ruler and subject there is [an] upright [relationship].

而所以成男女之別，而立夫婦之義也。男女有別，而後夫婦有義；夫婦有義，而後父子有親；父子有親，而後君臣有正。⁶⁶

The idea of a social relationship is built up from that between male and female, to that of the patriarchal line of a family. This pattern then forms the basis of the relationship

⁶⁵ *Liji Zhushu*, 61:999.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 61: 1000.

between ruler and subject. In other words, the ritual classic interprets the politic hierarchy of ruler and subject as an extension of the patriarchal family structure which is itself enforced by the marriage ritual. Nevertheless it is not necessary that the rituals produced by the later dynasties absolutely concurred with this interpretation.

Most current scholarship on marriage ritual has only established its relevance to order via its direct relevance to the hierarchy of the family and kinship.⁶⁷ On the other hand although marriage in the aristocracy has often been regarded as a way of consolidating status within the state hierarchy, the significance of the marriage ritual in this aspect has long been neglected. For the marriages of imperial princes and their consorts, the rituals were designed by Confucian scholars and officials under the patronage of the emperor. In other words the rituals were the interpretations of the status of the imperial relatives from the Confucian scholars and the officials under the supervision of the emperor. From a retrospective view the emperor's blood and marital relatives could occupy high status in the state hierarchy and the management of them could be a concern of the emperor and his government. This thesis will explore the rituals as a tool of imperial rule, that is to say the rituals are of interest as a tool to manage the relationships between the parties affected by the marriages of imperial princes. On the basis that marriage rituals symbolise the movements of the involved parties from their original status to the targeted status in the society, changes to the marriage rituals are then accordingly the modifications to this movement which implies adjustments in the original and/or target status of the couple and their families. These adjustments in the status of the parties affected by the imperial princes' marriage

⁶⁷ E.g. Chen Guyuan, *Zhongguo hunyinshi*, 48–52. Shi Fengyi, *Zhongguo Gudai de Hunyin Yu Jiating*, 16–18.

rituals will be examined against the changing strategies for managing the imperial family at different times.

MANAGEMENT OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

In the Hongwu reign the emperor established principalities to turn the imperial princes, i.e. his younger sons, into supporting beams of the state mechanism. For around two decades (Hongwu 8-26, 1375-1392) he arranged the marriages of imperial princes before they were dispatched to their principalities. During these two decades the imperial princes were matched with daughters of meritorious officials who had been ennobled or who would be ennobled soon after. This marriage policy is generally recognized as a special arrangement during the Hongwu period with its purpose widely accepted as being to centralise the power of the imperial family.⁶⁸

The principalities of the Hongwu reign were claimed to be a revival of an ancient ruling system which was traced back to the Zhou dynasty (11 century BC -256 BC). According to the Hongwu emperor the rationale behind the revival was the following:

The system of fiefs was established by former kings as a means to protect people, the Zhou exercised it and [therefore] lasted long; the Qin (221 BC -207BC) abolished it and [therefore] collapsed in a short time. Ever since the Han and the Jin there has not been [a single dynasty which] did not follow this [rule in its life time]. During the periods [between the Han to now], the quality of governance varied ([the degree

⁶⁸ Wei Lianke, "Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue," 175–178.

of] order and chaos was unlevelled or uneven), if one reflects on what had been done [to maintain the quality of governance]. Basically as for the strategy for [the dynasty] to last long, nothing is better than this [system].⁶⁹

先王封建所以庇民，周行之而久遠，秦廢之而速亡，漢晉以來莫不皆然，其間治亂不齊，特顧施為何如爾？要之為長久之計，莫過於此。

The system of the Zhou dynasty allocated fiefs to royal princes, kinsmen as well as close allies from outside the royal family. It evolved into a multitude of political entities in the period known as the Eastern Zhou (771-256 BC) when the Zhou lost most of its centralising power. As the winner among these entities, the former vassal state of the Qin defeated the Zhou in 256 BC and established a unified Qin Empire in 221 BC. The title of emperor was created and in use for the first time with new administrative units such as *jun* 郡 (commandery) and *xian* 縣 (county). The governors and magistrates of these units were usually appointed and not hereditary. This system, which deviated greatly from the organization with fiefs under the Zhou, was first applied to the newly conquered lands but gradually to the internal lands of the Qin.⁷⁰ The Qin dynasty (221-207 BC) lasted only fifteen years before the civil wars and the rise of the subsequent Han dynasty. At its foundation the Han Empire developed a combination of the two systems. Its territory was divided into the 15 commanderies directly under the control of the central government and the surrounding kingdoms

⁶⁹ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 5: 999.

⁷⁰ Bodde, "The State and Empire of Ch'in," 21–23, 25–27.

governed by imperial family members and close allies. The independence of these so-called imperial marquises (諸侯王) was limited and restrained in the middle of the western Han (206BC-9AD). In the eastern Han (25-220AD) the institution of kingdoms lost most of its practical significance.⁷¹

Zhu Yuanzhang's statement took the "system of fiefs" as a cultural heritage from the Zhou. The institutional evolution of the Qin and Han dynasty, however, demonstrated the incapacity of the loose political organization of the Zhou to fit the demand of managing a unified empire. In fact even during his own reign Zhu Yuanzhang had to make several modifications to the "system of fiefs" which he installed. Various aspects from posts in the imperial prince's court to their administrative and military power were adjusted at different points in the reign.⁷² These changes were partially because of the emperor's problem of controlling his sons, especially the imperial princes who abused their power and disturbed rather than assisted with local governance.⁷³

The management of the imperial family is by no means a unique problem to the Hongwu reign or the Ming dynasty. In theory every single reigning emperor would head both his family and his state and employ some strategy to manage them. The maintenance of the imperial clan was important to secure the durability of the dynasty, for the heir to the throne could be selected among them if a previous emperor died

⁷¹ Loewe, "The Structure and Practice of Government," 463–490.

⁷² Huang Zhangjian, "Lun Huang Ming Zuxunlu Banxing Niandai Bing Lun Mingchu Fengjian Zhuwang Zhidu."

⁷³ Tan Jiaqi, "Cong Taizu Huangdi Qinlu Kan Ming Taizu Xiuding Zuxunlu de Yuanyin. For the crimes of Hongwu imperial princes see also Chan, "Ming Taizu's Problem with His Sons: Prince of Qin's Criminality and Early-Ming Politics."

without any direct male descendant. On the other hand the imperial clan members, especially the lesser sons of the emperor were often seen as potential threats to the throne. There was also the problem of the positioning of the imperial descendants in the state hierarchy which itself was evolving throughout the history of imperial China. The emperor, sometimes under the influences of his advisors and with reference to historical precedents, was responsible for the strategic management of his blood relatives in their particular historical settings. What had to be decided does not only include political power, social privileges and the financial benefits that should be granted to the imperial descendants, but also the number of generations that should be recognized as part of the imperial family or clan. It was not until the Song that the recognition of the imperial clan was expanded to all imperial descendants. Thereupon the differentiation between the close and distant imperial descendants also became a concern.⁷⁴

An additional complexity in the management of the imperial family is that of the kin of the imperial family/clan by marriage. The kin by marriage were essentially constructed for the continuity of the imperial clan. However the marital relatives of the imperial family/clan could assume special positions in the state. In many cases politics played roles in the arrangement of their connections with the imperial family. For example in the second moon of Hongwu 20 (1387) the emperor accused both the Prince of Lu and his primary consort of serious crimes, declaring that: “the daughter of Duke of State Xin (i.e. the primary consort of the Prince of Lu) should be sentenced

⁷⁴ Especially with the growing size of the imperial clan, for details see Chaffee, *Branches of Heaven: A History of the Imperial Clan of Sung China*, 64–94.

to death by slicing”.⁷⁵ Five months later the second daughter of the Duke of State Xin (Tang He 湯和 1326-1395) was married off to the Prince of Lu to replace her elder sister.⁷⁶ Obviously the connection between the Prince of Lu and Tang He was so desirable that the emperor arranged another marriage for the Prince of Lu and Tang’s second daughter despite the his disappointment in Tang’s eldest daughter. However, toward the end of the reign the emperor adjusted the marriage policy for imperial princes and selected daughters from families of middle-low ranked non-military officials (rank 6a).⁷⁷

The management of the imperial family and clan involved multiple tasks: grading within the family and clan, the treatment of blood and marital relatives, and fixing their respective positions in relation to the rest of the state. This thesis will demonstrate how the revisions to the marriage rituals for imperial princes during the Hongwu reign relates to the changing positions of the imperial princes and their in-laws. The starting point of this thesis will be the textualised rituals (records, prescriptions) to recover the innovations in the symbols produced in the Hongwu reign. It will then analyse adjustments in strategies in the managing of the imperial family reflected by the changes to the symbols of rituals. The reading of the adjustments will then be contextualised with their contemporary political environment regarding the marriage policy of the imperial princes and the fates of their in-laws. Thus the changes

⁷⁵ Zhu Yuanzhang, “Taizu Huangdi Qinlu,” 76: 合當凌遲信國公女. See also Chan, “Ming Taizu’s Problem with His Sons: the Prince of Qin’s Criminality and Early-Ming Politics,” 62–64.

⁷⁶ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 183: 2756.

⁷⁷ The selection of primary consorts for imperial princes were under the control of the government throughout the Ming. In the later period their marital relatives were excluded or even removed from any official posts of political significance. Wei Lianke, “Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue,” 175–178.

in the rituals will be understood through the three levels of the text, ritual, and the management strategy imposed on the imperial princes and their in-laws.

OUTLINE

In this thesis the key aspects to be explored are the historical background of the development stages of the rituals of interest, the extraction of innovations in the rituals produced at different stages and the analysis of the strategies embodied in the repetitively used symbols. The first chapter will give an overall picture of the historical events relevant to the developments in the rituals of the interest whereas each of the following three chapters will focus on a particular symbol that changed most significantly in each stage of the development.

Chapter I first explores the history of the Hongwu reign with reference to the three-stages of development in the marriage rituals for imperial princes (i.e. Hongwu 1-8 [1368-1375], Hongwu 8-26 [1375-1393] and Hongwu 26- 31 [1393-1398]). I will conduct the historical enquiry in two parallel aspects of the emperor's ritual activities and family developments. The emperor was convinced that it should take a generation to achieve the ideal shapes for rituals which could enhance the ideal order of the state. Hence his government continued to experiment with rituals throughout the reign. Meanwhile he also experimented in the appropriate positioning of his family, especially with the status of the imperial princes and their in-laws. The second stage of the marriage rituals for imperial princes coincided with the emperor's preparation for the dispatching of the imperial princes to their principality. The transition between the second stage and the third stage is examined against the backdrop of the famous purges in the later Hongwu reign. This chapter serves as a base for an analysis of the detailed textual changes in the rituals at each stage in the following three chapters.

Chapter II deals with the prescriptions produced in the initial stages of the reign (Hongwu 1-8). In particular it concentrates on the scale of the marriage rituals. In its institutionalised versions the marriage ritual is normally scaled to fit the social spectrum. However there are only brief instructions for scaling marriage rituals existing in the ritual classics. In the precedents from earlier dynasties both the way to reflect the differences between classes and the division between the classes varied from one period to another. The first comprehensive set *Mingjili* had two conflicting scales of marriage ritual represented by its review of the precedents and the actual prescriptions. This chapter closely inspects scales of marriage rituals in the *Kaiyuan Li*, *Zhenghe Li* and the prescriptions of the early Hongwu reign. It reveals the overall efforts of elevating the imperial princes in the Hongwu reign. Yet the conflict in the scale of ritual differentiation between the heir apparent and the imperial princes is possibly a reflection of disagreements about the extent to which the distinction should be rendered between them.

Chapter III tackles the updated marriage ritual practice in stage 2, beginning with Prince of Qin's marriage to his second consort in Hongwu 8. This practice provided an embryonic form of the prescriptions produced in the third stage. The most significant change in this practice is the unprecedented arrangement of the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage ritual. The ancestral sacrifice has been a most disputed aspect of the marriage ritual and the disagreement started from the Han dynasty. The rituals designed in the subsequent dynasties often show sympathy to the intellectual development of their own time. However the situation is further complicated by the involvement of the imperial ancestral shrine(s) in the marriage rituals of the imperial family members. Through the Tang and the Song more attention had been paid to the dual functions of the imperial ancestral shrine as a power authority and a regular

family shrine, which in turn contributes to the innovation of Fengxian Dian 奉先殿 (Hall of Serving Forebears) and Tai Miao 太廟 (Great Shrine) as inner and outer imperial shrines in the Hongwu reign. Their associations in the different types of rituals further indicate that the emperor aimed to implant a new form of power hierarchy at the time before the imperial princes set off to their principalities in the Hongwu reign.

Chapter IV probes the difference between the two sets of prescriptions of the last stage, i.e. those published in Hongwu 26 and 27 respectively. The Hongwu 26 set was replaced by the Hongwu 27 set without being put into practice. In comparison to its immediate precedent, the Hongwu 27 set merged all the section headings in the prescriptions for the *nazheng* (the submission of the proof, one of the six rites) with those for the *ce* 冊 (conferring) of the consort and re-divided them into two headings. The resulting first heading as *nazheng* lost its original meaning as a procedure of marriage negotiation in the woman's family residence. Instead it prescribes a procedure for the emperor's dispatching of messengers in the palace. Both this procedure and the *ce* can be traced back to the ritual classics. In the Tang and Song prescriptions the emperor's dispatching of the messengers and the *ce* gained more and more political significance. The final shape of the *nazheng* and *ce* in the Hongwu 27 set of prescriptions suggests a formal conversion of the marriage ritual from an activity between two families to a political event between the emperor and his subject where the emperor recruited marital relatives for his sons.

Based on the above four chapters, the thesis will conclude by combining the results of the individual chapters' findings. The movement from one stage to another will be scrutinized in order to advance our understanding of the changes in the

marriage rituals of the imperial princes during the Hongwu reign. This will be followed by an analysis of how the state hierarchies were incorporated into the marriage rituals. The end of the thesis will be devoted to a review of the methodological framework to decipher the changes in the rituals in the context of historical developments.

Chapter I.

The Three Stages

Updates to the imperial princes' marriage rituals manifested in various formats in the Hongwu Reign. Firstly there were sets of prescriptions compiled at different time during the reign. These include the published ones as well as the sets recorded in the *Veritable Records* (實錄). Some of the recorded prescriptions were collected into work published later and some were used as basis for further published work. As early as Hongwu 1 (1368) there were prescriptions for marriage rituals compiled for the heir apparent, imperial princes, officials and commoners.¹ The next set was compiled two years later as the *Mingjili* 明集禮 (Collected Rituals of the Ming), with two additional entries for emperor and princesses. After almost two decades, in the first moon of Hongwu 26 (1393) another set of prescriptions for imperial princes' marriage rituals was compiled, which were then adapted to be included in the work *Zhusi Zhizhang* 諸司職掌 (Handbook of Government Posts) published two months later.² In the seventh moon of the following year (Hongwu 27, 1394) another set of prescriptions for imperial princes' marriage rituals were compiled. Apparently this set had not been included in any works published in the Hongwu reign, but in the *Da Ming Huidian* 大明會典 (Collected Statutes of the Great Ming) from the later period. Hence there were in total four versions of prescriptions for imperial princes' marriage rituals during the reign, i.e. Hongwu 1 (1368), Hongwu 3 (1370), Hongwu 26 (1393) and Hongwu 27

¹ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 37:711–743.

² *Ibid.*, 224:3279–3293.

(1394). The prescriptions can be roughly divided into two groups upon the variations in the different versions: the initial group consisting of prescriptions compiled in Hongwu 1 and included in the *Mingjili* (Hongwu 3) and the final group in Hongwu 26 (included in *Zhusi Zhizhang*) and Hongwu 27.

Although the practices are typically seen as the “real” form of the marriage rituals, the historians seemed to be less keen to put them into written records. In the *Veritable Records* for the emperor Hongwu the first and only detail recording marriage ritual practices of imperial princes was that of the Prince of Qin (Zhu Shuang 朱棣 1356-1395) to his secondary consort in the eleventh moon of the eighth year (1375).³ The primary consort of the Prince of Qin who married him in the fourth year (1371) was the younger sister of KōKō Temür (擴廓帖木兒 or Wang Baobao 王保保 ?- 1375) a general of the Mongolian force, who remained a major threat to the Ming until his death.⁴ The record for the practice of the Prince of Qin’s first marriage ritual was very brief, only mentioning two typical steps with few details whereas every step of the second ceremony was recorded in great detail. This ritual was designated for the Prince of Qin’s marrying his secondary consort, and, markedly deviated from the prescriptions from the beginning of the reign. The changed procedure of the ritual for this marriage appears to an embryonic form of the 1393 prescriptions.⁵ Furthermore

³ Ibid., 102:1717–1720.

⁴ This marriage ritual was a special arrangement as the consort’s father was dead. However, Zhu Yuanzhang dismissed the mourning requirement for the consort and married her to the Prince of Qin. For the record of marriage see Ibid., 68:1272. For the struggle between KōKō Temür and the Ming force see Langlois, “The Hung-Wu Reign, 1368-1398,” 128–131. In the biography of KōKō Temür two different Chinese names were used for him, Kuolun Tiemuer 擴廓帖木兒 and Wang Baobao 王保保 in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 124:3713.

⁵ Though the record for the Prince of Qin’s first marriage seemed to suggest that the marriage negotiation was minimised to the *nazheng* in as early as the fourth year, most of the significant changes to the marriage rituals appear in the record for his second marriage in the 8th year. This record that is the first and the only detailed one among all the imperial princes’ marriage rituals in the Hongwu reign bear great resemblances to the Hongwu 26 prescriptions: e.g. there was the dispatching

there were twenty imperial princes married during the Hongwu reign, however the practices of rituals for all other imperial princes were omitted in the *Veritable Records*. Therefore the eighth year procedure should be regarded as a milestone in the development of the marriage rituals for imperial princes during the reign.

The timings of the practice and the prescriptions of the marriage rituals for the imperial family segment the Hongwu reign. Based on variations in the steps there were three main stages in the development of marriage rituals for imperial princes, with the eighth year and twenty-sixth as transitional points. The developmental stages accompanied the emperor's endeavours to establish ritual institutions in accordance with the political process of structuring his state during his own reign. The marriage rituals of imperial princes were a tool to manage the sons of the emperor and their in-laws. Consequently the rituals were co-products of the *wen* (civil) aspect concerning the formulation of the rituals and the *wu* (military) aspect concerning the people to be managed as both the Hongwu imperial princes and their in-laws were military personnel at the time. This chapter will examine the two aspects at different developmental stages. The first section of the chapter will analyse the *wen* aspect in the form of the emperor's long-lasting and passionate ambition to develop the ritual institution during his reign. It will then continue with the *wu* aspect in two sections: the marrying off of his sons to meritorious military officials and the fates of the ennobled in-laws of his children in conjunction with the purges of officials during the

of the messengers in the procedure of the *nazheng* 納徵 (submission of the proof), the possession and ritual costumes were sent to consort's home after the *nazheng* and the gifts for *cui Zhuang* 催粧 (expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]) were sent afterward with the consort's family entered the palace to *pufang* 鋪房 (deck the room) before the consort's arrival and at the end both the prince and his consort *huimen* 回門 (return to [bride's natal] home). *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 102:1717–1720.

Hongwu reign. This chapter aims to establish the associations of the developmental stages in the two aspects through the lenses of the marriages of the imperial princes.

RITUALS FOR THE HONGWU EMPEROR: A THIRTY-YEAR

ENDEAVOUR

Zhu Yuanzhang regarded rituals derived from the so-called Confucian traditional as a tool to claim the “cultural orthodoxy” of his own government as opposed to the Mongolian Yuan government (1271-1368). His government made great efforts to establish and promote “orthodoxy” of the broadly defined rituals (or *li*) as codes of conduct. Detailed regulations were made from those discriminating and forbidding several contemporary practices within marriage and funeral rituals to those for clothes according to people’s classes.⁶ The *Mingshi* 明史 (History of the Ming) recorded fourteen governmental works on ritual that had been compiled in the thirty-one years of the Hongwu reign, more than any of the subsequent reigns of the dynasty. It should also be emphasised that the emperor’s opinion over the rituals was by no means static during the reign.⁷ From the founding of the dynasty to his death, although the emperor’s interest in rituals seemed never be in decline his vision for the rituals gradually changed.

Before the dynasty was founded Zhu Yuanzhang merely advocated the urgency of establishing rituals:

⁶ Zhang Jia, “Zaixu Yilun: Hongwu Shiqi de Hunsang Lisu Gaige.” Zhang Jia, *Xin Tianxia Zhi Jiahua: Ming Chu Lidu Gaige Yanjiu*.

⁷ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 47: 1123–1124.

The house of Yuan was confused and chaotic [so that they] did not establish any network [sustaining their state] [...] Rituals and laws are the networks sustaining the state [...] When a state is being newly established, they constitute the first order of priority.

元氏昏亂，紀綱不立……禮法，國之綱紀……建國初，此為先務。⁸

After he ascended the throne, it came to his attention that there were elements in the ritual texts that were different and distant from the contemporary time. In his decree upon the production of the ritual utensils for the Tai Miao 太廟 (Great Shrine), he stated:

The present time cannot be past time, just as the past time cannot be present time, the rituals [which] guide human sentiment can come out of the meanings [of the precedents and classics], what is important is the consideration for appropriateness, and it is necessary to have adjustments [for compiling new rituals].

今之不可為古，猶古之不能為今，禮順人情，可從義起，所貴斟酌得宜，必有損益。⁹

⁸ By Zhu Yuanzhang three years before the establishment of the Ming in 1364, *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 14: 176.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 29:484.

As a result the utensils derived from the classical texts were replaced by daily life utensils made with gilt silver. This decree issued in the first moon of the first year of the Hongwu reign already demonstrates the emperor's sense of differences between past and present. This sense was fully realised as an idea that rituals should be in accordance with time, possibly by the later compilation of the first set of the prescriptions.

The first record of the emperor's idea of rituals "in accordance with time" is found in Hongwu 3 (1370) on the occasion of his finishing reading the biography of Shusun Tong 叔孫通 (c 194BC) who composed a scheme for court rituals for the founding emperor of the Han dynasty (Emperor Gaozu, 256-159BC, r.202-195BC). Two scholars objected to Shusun's scheme, claiming that rituals could only be formulated in a peaceful dynasty by cultivating virtues for more than a hundred years.

¹⁰ In defence of Shusun Tong, Zhu Yuanzhang argued:

To establish [ritual] institution for a dynasty from the ruins [of former periods] (literally burnt ashes) should be regarded as a challenge [...] [I] have heard that the rituals of former [sage] kings were to define appropriateness in accordance with time. Confucius also said twelve months [for something considerable], three years [for perfection] and a generation (thirty years) for [prevailing virtue], which probably also refers to the definition of appropriateness in accordance with

¹⁰ For the biography of Shusun Tong see Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 99:2721–2727.

time. [The suggestion of] the necessity of waiting for a hundred years is indeed pedantry.

於煨燼之餘，以成一代之制，亦可謂難矣……聞先王之禮，因時制宜。孔子亦曰，期月三年必世，蓋亦因時制宜之謂。必待百年則誠迂矣。¹¹

The emperor's references to Confucius should be derived from two separate entries in the *Lunyu* 論語 (Analects). The first one reads: "the Master said, 'if there were (any of the rulers) who would employ me, in the course of twelve months, I should have done something considerable. In three years, the government would be perfected.'" ¹² The second one says: "The Master said, 'If a truly royal ruler was to arise, it would still require a generation, and then virtue would prevail.'" ¹³ In the context of the *Lunyu* the first entry concerns the master himself whereas the second one concerns his opinion toward a royal ruler. Nevertheless, by juxtaposing these two entries Zhu Yuanzhang developed a peculiar theory for defining appropriate ritual in accordance with time. In this theory rituals could be different depending on the lengths of ruling periods from twelve month, to three years and to a generation for the initial period of a dynasty. In other words he regarded the making of rituals as a dynamic process within the time period of a generation (thirty years) for founding a dynasty. He then in turn practised this theory by defining rituals' appropriateness in accordance to contemporary requirements during his reign. Furthermore in the emperor's opinion

¹¹ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 43: 845.

¹² *Lunyu Zhushu*, 13: 117-1: 子曰，苟有用我者。期月而已可也，三年有成。

¹³ *Ibid*: 子曰，如有王者，必世而後仁。

the human sentiments play a role in defining appropriateness, which can be read from his decree of crafting golden utensils for the Tai Miao in the third year:

Rituals are derived from human sentiments, [they should be adjusted to] appropriateness in accordance with time, it is not necessary to stick to antiquity.

禮緣人情，因時宜，不必泥於古。¹⁴

The first critical challenge by Zhu Yuanzhang to the ritual proposal by his officials exemplified his application of this principle. In the seventh year (1374) after the death of the Noble Consort Sun (1343-1374) the emperor asked the ministry of rite to develop codes for mourning clothes. However by referring to the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Rites of Zhou) and the *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Ceremonial), the minister of rite Niu Liang 牛諒 (?) suggested that no mourning clothes should be worn for a secondary wife of one's father if the father is still alive.¹⁵ The emperor immediately dismissed this proposal and commented:

The favour from [one's] father and mother is unity, yet the mourning clothes were [prescribed] in such different manners. It deviated too much from human sentiment.

¹⁴ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 43:848–849.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 94:1361.

父母之恩一也，而喪服低昂若是。其不近於
人情甚矣。¹⁶

Thereupon the emperor instructed the grand academician of Hanlin Academy, Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1382) to further investigate mourning clothes, saying:

Human sentiment changes endlessly and the rituals are for appropriateness in accordance with change. When they find the places where the human heart takes its rest then it is the place where heavenly principle resides.

夫人情有無窮之變，而禮為適變之宜，得人心之所安，
即天理之所在。¹⁷

After carrying out research on existing discourse on the mourning clothes for mother, Song Lian reported that the majority of scholars that he had studied expressed a willingness to wear mourning clothes for their mothers for three years, the same length as for their fathers. Zhu Yuanzhang adapted this length of time and further prescribed that the mourning clothes of the highest grade should be worn for one's mother as that were used for one's father. Moreover, a son should wear mourning clothes of the highest grade for three years for his parents, for his birth mother even if she is not the primary wife of his father, for his step mother and adopted mother if

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid.

applicable.¹⁸ Correspondingly the emperor required the Prince of Zhou (朱橚 1361-1425) to wear the highest grade mourning clothes for three years for Noble Consort Sun who had raised the prince.¹⁹ Four moons later the corresponding prescriptions for mourning clothes were published as the *Xiaoci Lu* 孝慈錄 (Records of Filial Piety and Compassion). The *Xiaoci Lu* overwrote the codes for mourning clothes compiled at the beginning of the reign and marked a crucial changing point in codes for mourning clothes from those that had been derived from the classical texts.²⁰

In the following year (Hongwu 8, 1375) the emperor began to impose his own view on the grand sacrifices. This was achieved through several steps: he first claimed that the location of the imperial ancestral shrine Tai Miao was too remote and decreed to relocate it from the southwest of the city Yingtian (modern Nanjing) to the left of the Duanmen 端門 (Upright gate) of the palace. In the following year (1377) the emperor moved the *sheji* 社稷 (the [altars for] [the god of] Soil and [god of] Grain) to the right of the Duanmen, merged the altars and made some updates to the procedure of the sacrifice. Later in the year the suburban sacrifices to the Heaven and Earth were merged together, in the prayer for first such sacrifice the emperor said:

¹⁸ Ibid., 94: 1361. The mourning clothes of the highest grade refer to *zhancui* 斬衰 (untrimmed sackcloth), in precedents the mourning clothes for mothers were no higher than the second grade, i.e. *zicui* 齊衰 (trimmed sackcloth).

¹⁹ Ibid., 93:1624–1625. The title of the Prince of Zhou was changed later in 1378 (Hong 11) from the Prince of Wu and he was mentioned as the Prince of Wu in the entry on the death of noble consort Sun. Ibid., 117:1907.

²⁰ For example cf. *Mingjili*, juan 38. The regulations was still followed according to the Yu Ruji, *Libu Zhigao*, 631. The *Libu Zhigao* was compiled in 1620 (Taichang 1). For the detailed studies on the changes in the codes of mourning clothes in the *Xiaoci Lu* see Inoue Tōru cho, *Chūgoku No Sōzoku to Kokka No Reisei : Sōhō Shugi No Shiten Kara No Bunseki*, 443–477.

The rituals are derived from their meanings, it should set value on where both the texts [of classics and precedents] and [human] sentiment taken to their limits. Formerly at the beginning of the dynasty, the ancient system was obeyed and sacrifices to the Heaven and Earth were separately offered in the southern and northern suburbs. Having come back and forth for nine years, [my] mind has never been settled. Truly as for the rulers, Heaven [is like his] father and Earth [his] mother, the favour of the covering above and the support beneath is unity. [Yet] when [one] solemnly offers sacrifices [to Heaven and Earth], there would be the difference of south and north. [If we] employ a metaphor from human matters, when a son serves his parents, how could he dare to place them in different locations? [I] personally consider the separated sacrifices from the encyclopaedias were the texts of the rituals; [whereas] the merge of the sacrifices were sentiment in the rituals. [Sacrifices] merely sticking to the texts without soothing [human] sentiments cannot be called rituals.

禮以義起，貴乎情文兩盡。曩者建國之初，遵依古制，分祀天地於南北郊，周旋九年，於心未安。誠以人君者，父母天地，仰覆載生成之恩一也。及其嚴奉禋祀，則有南北之異，揆以人事，人子事親，曷敢異處？竊惟典禮

其分祀者，禮之文也。其合祀者，禮之情也。徒泥其文
而情不安不可謂禮。²¹

The first merged suburban sacrifices took place at the Fengtian Dian 奉天殿 (Hall for Serving Heaven) since the newly erected venue was still under construction. The new venue was then completed in the winter of the eleventh year. It is a covered hall called *Dasi Dian* 大祀殿 (Hall for Grand Sacrifice) on the site of round mound altar (*huanqiu* 圜丘) in the south suburban where the separated sacrifice to the Heaven had been offered since the beginning of the dynasty.

The erection of a covered hall was at least partially due to the poor weather conditions during the previous sacrifices. In his *Dasiwen* 大祀文 (Essay on the Grand Sacrifices) the emperor particular mentioned that wind and rain had been experienced on almost every single occasion of previous grand sacrifices. The emperor composed the *Dasiwen* for the first sacrifice at the *Dasi Dian* in the spring of twelfth year. In the essay he interpreted the poor weather condition as a result of the inappropriate conducts of the sacrifices. Furthermore the emperor directly criticised his civil officials, saying:

Since I ascended the throne, [I have] ordered Confucian officials to browse through all the books, to investigate the encyclopaedia of sacrifices from Zhou up to the Song and Yuan. [The prescriptions compiled] after this investigations were followed and [the sacrifices] were accordingly conducted.

²¹*Ming Taizu Shilu*, 116:1897.

However at the time when the sacrifices are being conducted, only [the sacrifices to] the ancestral shrines quite fitted with human sentiment. [When it] comes to the sacrifice at southern and northern suburbs, and that for Soil and Grain, there were manifold [aspects which] diverged from human sentiment.

朕即位以來，命儒臣邊歷群書，自周以至於宋、元，皆考祀事之典，既考之後，守而行之，然當行祀之時，惟宗廟頗合人情，及南北二郊，以及社稷，甚有不如人情者。²²

Through this essay the emperor did not only claim his own victory in interfering in rituals but also highlighted Confucian officials' incompetence at their jobs. The essay actually signified the emperor's re-organisation of the bureaucracy in the following year (Hongwu 13, 1380) when he embarked on the most significant change to the organization of the government – the purge of the office of the grand councillor.²³

The grand councillor had been created in the Qin (221-207BC) and continued in the Han (206 BC-220 AD) as the highest office of the bureaucracy. Thus the abolition of the office has been described as the “single most important step in the strengthening of the Ming autocracy. It left the emperor as the sole central agency with authority to coordinate the activities of the six ministries, the five regional military

²² Zhu Yuanzhang, “Dasiwen Bing Gejiuzhang”, 176.

²³ The *Dasiwen* as a signal for the purge of the office of the grand councillor was already suggested in Ho, “The Organization and Functions of the Ministry of Rites in the Early Ming Period (1368-1398),” 118–125.

commissions and the various censorial bodies”.²⁴ It also resulted in some of the most peculiar aspects of the political history in the later Ming dynasty, for example the rise of grand secretariat and powerful eunuchs.

The emperor regarded the officials purged in Hongwu 13 as representation of evil and he used their example when advocating “his own version of a morally good Confucian government”.²⁵ As reflected by the *Dasiwen* the emperor’s disinclination towards the formerly recruited Confucian scholars preceded the formal and systemic changes applied to the bureaucratic structure in Hongwu 13. Taking the ministry of rites as an example, though it was only after Hongwu 13 that the emperor was directly in charge of it, as early as Hongwu 10 (1377) when the first merged suburban sacrifice was performed, many Confucian scholars such as Liu Ji 劉基 (1311-1375) and Song Lian who had assisted in the founding of dynasty were either dead or had already departed from their official posts. The emperor’s success in reforming the grand sacrifices demonstrated his confidence in ritual and was effectively a precursor for the reorganization of the bureaucracy with his own vision of administrative order.²⁶ Hence in the first half of his reign the emperor’s interfering in the rituals was to some extent a competition with his Confucian scholars for this important means of enhancing his authority with Confucian values.

²⁴ Farmer, *Zhu Yuanzhang and Early Ming Legislation : The Reordering of Chinese Society Following the Era of Mongol Rule*, 49.

²⁵For the details of Hongwu 13 purge see Massey, “Chu Yuan-Chang and the Hu-Lan Cases of the Early Ming Dynasty,” 97–135.

²⁶ For the emperor’s struggle with the Confucian officials over rituals see Ho, “The Organization and Functions of the Ministry of Rites in the Early Ming Period (1368-1398),” 138–146.

On the other hand, what did last to the end of the reign was the emperor's belief that appropriate rituals could only be developed over the course of a generation. In the Hongwu 28 (1395) he said:

Confucius stated that [it] requires a generation before virtue can prevail. I have been on the throne for [almost] thirty years. The texts of the ritual and music are roughly completed, yet [my] governance cannot be comparable to the ancient times, [I] reckon it is because [of my] meagre virtue.

孔子必世而後仁之說，朕居位已三十年矣。禮樂之文粗備，而政治不能如古，揆德涼薄故也。²⁷

The emperor's quotation of Confucius resonates with the argument he deployed to defend the historical figure Shusun Tong in Hongwu 3. Apparently at least from the third year onwards the emperor had held the same opinion that the period of thirty years is an appropriate length of time for conceiving proper order. In the emperor's expectation the process of maturing the institutionalised rituals and music would enhance the perfection of the political situation. This is virtually a statement by the emperor of his direct reliance for the governance upon rituals and music. His thirty-year endeavour in rituals was ultimately aimed at pursuing ideal governance. This point is important as it suggests that the aforementioned struggle with the Confucian officials was only one aspect of the endeavour rather than its overall purpose.

²⁷ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 239: 3479.

The subject matter of this thesis, marriage rituals for imperial princes, concerned the emperor's family members – the imperial princes as blood relatives and their in-laws as marital relatives, most of whom were granted military power at the time. The fates of the in-laws of the imperial princes were dramatic and diverse in the reign. Most of them were installed as nobles, but towards the end of the reign some were eliminated whereas a few others were granted power to interfere in the business of the imperial clan. This section has demonstrated the importance of rituals being appropriate to human sentiments. The following sections will explore the developments in the imperial family with reference to the developmental stages of the marriage ritual in order to advance our understanding of the timings of these stages.

NOBLES AS MARITAL RELATIVES: AN OVERSIMPLIFIED CASE

During the Hongwu reign the statuses of the imperial princes and their marital relatives were at the highest point they would reach in the entire Ming period. Later in the dynasty the imperial princes faced more restraints and their marital relatives were also kept away from the centre of power.²⁸ Consequently in modern studies on the marriage policy for the Ming imperial clan the Hongwu reign was regarded as a special case in the dynasty when the relationships between the imperial family and ennobled meritorious officials were built through marriages for centralising power.²⁹ However the dynamics in marriage policy for the imperial princes in the Hongwu reign is generally neglected in existing studies. This and the next sections will reveal how the

²⁸ Huo Tao 霍韬 (1487-1574) provides a detailed account of the restraints on imperial princes from political positions from the Xuande period (1426-1435). He also mentioned that the marital relatives of the imperial princes could not take any official position in the capital. Huo Tao, "Tianjie Shu," 627–628.

²⁹ e.g. Wei Lianke, "Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue," 175–178.

Hongwu emperor selected and positioned in-laws for his sons in accordance with the political course of his state.

In the Hongwu reign the emperor's first rounds of appointing imperial princes and nobles were both in the third year (1370). At that time the oldest imperial prince, the Prince of Qin (Zhu Shuang 朱樛 1356-1359) was only 14. Six out of the nine imperial princes appointed that year were under the age of ten.³⁰ Though being ranked below the imperial princes the nobles appointed later in the same year had all provided vital assistance to the emperor on the battlefield as well as in organizing the bureaucracy for this newly established dynasty. These nobles continued to occupy important positions in the government at this stage.

Three levels of titles for nobility were designated in the Hongwu 3, from high to low, were duke (公), marquis (侯) and earl (伯). Among the first two levels Li Shanchang 李善長 (1314-1390) who ranked first was the only civil official. Li Shanchang was the first advisor of Zhu Yuanzhang with a Confucian background. He joined in the camp of Zhu Yuanzhang in 1354 when Zhu was still a guard commander subordinated to the local leader Guo Zixing 郭子興 (?-1355). After the foundation of the dynasty Li Shanchang was the first grand councillor, supervising the rest of the government.³¹ Besides Li Shanchang the two other ennobled civil officials were both installed at the lowest level as earls. They were also the only two earls among all the

³⁰ Nine sons of the emperor were granted the title of imperial prince in the third year. Counted from the fifth son of Zhu Yuanzhang, the Prince of Zhou (also the Prince of Wu 朱橚, 1361-1452). Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 116:3559-3577. These numbers excluded the Prince of Jingjiang who was the grandson of the elder brother of Zhu Yuanzhang. He was also under the age of nine in Hongwu 3. *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 118:3612-3614.

³¹ Mote, "The Rise of the Ming Dynasty, 1330-1367," 46-47.

nobles, which left the military nobles dominating the levels of duke and marquis. The level of military nobles appears to have been determined by different metrics. The lengths of service were particularly important for the marquises. They were arranged in a hierarchy with the emperor's followers since 1352 at the top, the former leaders of Lake Chao (巢湖) who aligned themselves with Zhu in 1355 and played major roles in his crossing over the Yangzi River and later expansions in the middle, and other generals who surrendered later than 1356 at the bottom.³²

For the military dukes who had all been with Zhu Yuanzhang in the early years before his crossing of the Yangzi River (1355), their ranks depended on their merits with a consideration of their origins and their lengths of service. The first military duke was Xu Da 徐達 (1332-1358) who joined Zhu Yuanzhang in 1353. Xu was followed by Chang Mao 常茂 (?-1391) who received the title due to the merit of his deceased father Chang Yuchun, a major general who joined the Ming cause in 1355 and died in Hongwu 2 (1369).³³ The third duke, Li Wenzhong 李文忠 (1339-1384) was the son of the emperor's deceased elder sister who was brought by his father Li Zhen 李貞 (1303-1378) to Zhu Yuanzhang in 1353 and started service five years later at the age of nineteen.³⁴ The fourth was Feng Sheng 馮勝 (?-1395) a former leader of a local force who came to Zhu Yuanzhang in 1355.³⁵ At the end of the list, Deng Yu 邓愈 (1338-1378) was the son of a former superior of Zhu Yuanzhang, Deng Shun 鄧順 (?)

³² Tan Qian, *Guoque*, 262–264.

³³ Langlois, "The Hung-Wu Reign, 1368-1398," 107. See also biographies of Chang Yuchun and Chang Mao in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 3732–3738.

³⁴ Li Wenzhong's biography see Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 126:3741–3746.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 129:3795–3799. Langlois, "The Hung-Wu Reign, 1368-1398," 113.

who had fought alongside the local leader Guo Zixing. Apart from Chang Mao whose first service was almost two decades later, the other four military dukes were still heavily relied upon in campaigns and other duties such as frontier defences, and military training for troops and imperial princes.³⁶

Yet it was not until Hongwu 8 (1375) that the emperor began to choose the in-laws of imperial princes among the nobles. As a matter of fact though the heir apparent married to the daughter of the deceased Chang Yuchun (i.e. sister of Chang Mao) in the fourth year, neither of the two oldest imperial princes married before the eighth year were matched up to the female relative of any of the nobles appointed in the third year.³⁷ In contrast, from the eighth year, the daughters of three dukes, Deng Yu, Xu Da and Feng Sheng, were married to the Prince of Qin (as a secondary consort), the Prince of Yan (朱棣 1360-1424) and the Prince of Zhou (朱橚, 1361-1425). In other words except the imperial nephew Li Wenzhong the emperor turned all the functioning military dukes to in-laws of imperial princes in these three years.

The two marriages of the Prince of Qin are illustrative to the changes in the emperor's marriage policy for the imperial princes in this period. In Hongwu 4 (1371), a month before the Prince of Qin first got married, the Hongwu government had just completed its mission to restore the borderline along the Great Wall with the conquest

³⁶ The first campaign Chang Mao participated in was the one with his father-in-law Feng Sheng in Hongwu 20. Apparently the two dukes ran into conflict and Mao died four year later, see biography of Chang Mao in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 125:3737–3738. See also Dreyer, *Early Ming China - a Political History, 1355-1453*, 83.

³⁷ The two were the Prince of Qin's first marriage in Hongwu 4 and the Prince of Jin's (Zhu Gang 朱枏 1358-1398) marriage in Hongwu 6.

of Sichuan.³⁸ The still powerful Yuan loyalist KōKō Temür then became a main objective of the government. The Hongwu emperor regarded this Mongolian general highly and repetitively sent envoys to appeal to him. The marriage of the younger sister of KōKō and the Prince of Qin was one of his efforts to tempt the general. However none of the emperor's attempts seemed to work as KōKō continuously assaulted on the northern border. In the fifth year the emperor ordered three dukes, Xu Da, Li Wenzhong and Feng Sheng to assemble a force of 150,000 to target KōKō.³⁹ Despite Feng Sheng's successful march into Dunhuang, Xu Da and Li Wenzhong both suffered serious defeats. As a result the emperor decided to adopt a defensive strategy while KōKō remained a threat on the northern border.⁴⁰ The death of KōKō in the eighth moon of the eighth year dispelled worries of any further large-scale assaults by Mongolian troops.⁴¹ After several months the emperor married the Prince of Qin to the daughter of duke of state Wei, Deng Yu.

The second marriage of the Prince of Qin in Hongwu 8 formed part of the emperor's new agenda, the preparation for the oldest imperial princes to take in charge of their principalities. In the sixth year the emperor had already disclosed his plan to dispatch the imperial princes in the eighth or ninth year.⁴² This plan had been

³⁸ The relevant military process and the final establishment of the branch secretariat of the Sichuan see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 67: 1253–1261. See also Dreyer, "Military Origins of Ming China," 99–101.

³⁹ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 71:1321–1322.

⁴⁰ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 124:3712. For the significance of this defeat and the subsequent defensive strategies see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 102.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 2:30. Small-scale invasions by lesser Mongol leaders existed. See discussions in Dreyer, *Early Ming China - a Political History, 1355-1453*, 102.

⁴² In his decree to appoint one of the officials of the Prince of Qin's court in the Hongwu 6, the emperor mentioned that the imperial princes were to be dispatched to their principedoms in two or three years, see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 85: 1511. In the first moon of Hongwu 9 the emperor offered a sacrifice to Heaven especially for dispatching the imperial princes, *Ibid.*, 103:1732–1733.

postponed for a couple of years,⁴³ and in the second moon of Hongwu 9 the emperor instructed the oldest imperial princes to inspect their home region Fengyang, in order to dispose them to be responsible to the state and the family.⁴⁴ Eight months later in the eleventh moon the five oldest imperial princes were ordered to train the troops in Fengyang.⁴⁵ In the eleventh year the oldest two imperial princes took up residences in their principality while four younger ones were stationed in Fengyang.⁴⁶ It is evident that from the eighth year the emperor commenced his effort to enhance the military potential of the matured imperial princes via training as well as marriage affiliations.

The emperor then kept marrying his sons to the daughters of top military officials until Hongwu 26 (1393).⁴⁷ Yet there is little research focusing on the role of the mutual relationships between the imperial princes and their in-laws in the political process during the Hongwu reign.⁴⁸ This is possibly due to the fact that there were few survivors among the ennobled meritorious officials at the end of the reign⁴⁹ whereas

⁴³In the tenth moon of Hongwu 9 the son of Zhu Yuanzhang's nephew, the Prince of JingJiang (Zhu Shouqian 朱守謙 1361-1392) took residence in his principality, *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 110: 1829. Zhu Shouqian was given similar privileges as that to Zhu Yuanzhang's sons but was still considered in a lower status in comparison to the emperor's sons. (For example see the discussion on the construction of residence of Zhu Shouqian in comparison to those for the imperial princes Ibid., 107:1793-1794.)

⁴⁴ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 104: 1747.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 110:1823.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 117:1917.

⁴⁷ All the officials whose daughters were matched up with the imperial princes between 8th year and 26th year were military nobles except Yu Xian 於顯 (?-1387). Yu Xian was a *dudu* 都督 (commissioner-in-chief, rank 1a) at the time of the marriage of his daughter and the Prince of Tan in Hongwu 18, Ibid., 173: 2637. He was ennobled posthumously two years later, see Ibid., 187: 2806.

⁴⁸The only essay to deal with this topic to the author's knowledge is Liu Changjiang, "Ming Chu Huangshi Qinyin Guanxi Yu Lan Yu an." This essay was a speculation that the emperor's suspicion over the relationships between some of the imperial princes and their marital relatives such as Duke of state Liang, Lan Yu 藍玉 (?-1393) could be one of the causes of purge of the duke and his followers.

⁴⁹ The two purges refer to the trial of Hu Weiyong and the trial of Lan Yu. For a detailed account of the purges and the relevant research see Massey, "Chu Yuan-Chang and the Hu-Lan Cases of the Early Ming Dynasty."

the imperial princes were deployed in the key defensive positions along the border at around the same time.⁵⁰ A typical view in the modern research has concluded that the eliminations of the meritorious officials were signs of the emperor's favour to his own flesh and blood. The meritorious officials were seen as competitors for military power and so were eventually replaced by the imperial princes.⁵¹ This perspective caused an oversimplified explanation of the marriages of the imperial princes as if they had only meaning for the group of imperial princes. The significance of being in-laws of imperial princes was underestimated and all the meritorious officials were considered as a homogenous group as opposed to the imperial family.

However the figures from the Hongwu reign suggest that in reality the opposite was true. The in-laws of imperial princes were confined to an extremely limited subset of the meritorious officials. There were around seventy military nobles appointed in the Hongwu reign whereas the number of the emperor's sons was twenty-six. Among the emperor's sons twenty imperial princes got married during the Hongwu reign. Even though a couple of imperial princes had more than one entitled consorts the overall number of the ennobled in-laws of imperial princes is only eleven.⁵² In particular the daughters of nine nobles were matched up with ten imperial princes through eleven marriages during the second stage (between Hongwu 8 and Hongwu 26).⁵³ The greater number of imperial princes in comparison to that of the nobles is

⁵⁰ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 224: 3276.

⁵¹ See Wu Jihua, "Lun Mingdai Fengfan Yu Junshi Zhiquan Zhi Zhuanyi (I & II)."

⁵² For a complete list of the marriages of the Hongwu imperial princes see Table I-1 (appended to the chapter).

⁵³ The ten princes were the Prince of Qin, Yan, Zhou, Chu, Qi, Lu, Tan, Xiang, Shu, Dai. Nobles are Deng Yu, Xu Da, Feng Sheng, Wang Bi 王弼(?-1393), Wu Fu 吳復 (1331-1283), Tang He 湯和 (1326-1395), Yu Xian, Wu Zhong 吳忠 (? , son of Wu Zhen 吳禎 1328-1379), Lan Yu 藍玉 (?-1393), the Prince of An (朱楩 1383-1417) also married to a daughter of Xu Da, see Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 125: 3723. According to Wei Lianke, the Prince of An married in 1385 (Hongwu 18).

due to the fact that the Prince of Yan and the Prince of Dai (Zhu Gui 朱桂 1374-1446) were both matched up with the daughters of the same duke Xu Da. The difference in number of marriages and that of the imperial princes was caused by the two marriages of the Prince of Lu, both with the daughters of Tang He 湯和 (1326-1395). In other words even in the period of intensive conversions of meritorious officials to marital relatives, the emperor's strategy was not simply maximising the number of ennobled marital relatives. Rather his selection among meritorious officials were highly discriminatory, he arranged multiple marriages of imperial princes to emphasis and strengthen the relationships with targeted meritorious officials.

Furthermore at least some nobles were considered as being incorporated into the imperial family via their relationship by marriage. This can be seen in the *Huang Ming Zuxun* 皇明祖訓 (Ancestral Injunctions of August Ming) published in Hongwu 28 (1395). The *Huang Ming Zuxun* was the last version of the collective work of regulations for the imperial clan by the Hongwu emperor for contemporary and future members of imperial clan. In this version he inserted a list of relatives who would have the power to decide on the punishment of clansman who committed a criminal offense.⁵⁴ In other words, the emperor officially granted these marital relatives power over the business of imperial family and clan. The list of relatives begins with the natal families of the spouses of imperial family members. At the bottom of the list there are

However from *Ming Taizu Shilu* which is claimed as the primary source the marriage of the Prince of An is only mentioned in the summary of Xu Da's life after the record of his death. Wei seemed to have taken the year of Xu Da's death for the Prince of An's marriage. See *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 171:2618. Cf. Wei Lianke, "Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue," 188. Since the Prince of An was nine years younger than the Prince of Dai and his consort was also younger than the consort of the Prince of Dai, it is unlikely that the Prince of An married before the Prince of Dai. So the marriage of the Prince of An was not counted here.

⁵⁴ *Huang Ming Zuxun*, 3.

the families of five nobles. Among them the second was the family of a blood relative of the emperor Hongwu, the imperial nephew Li Wenzhong.⁵⁵ The fourth was the family of the adopted son of the emperor, i.e. Mu Ying 沐英 (1344-1392).⁵⁶ The other three, Xu Da, Deng Yu and Guo Ying 郭英 were all the marital relatives of imperial princes. The enumeration of these noble families as imperial relatives was a formal acknowledgment from the Hongwu emperor who recognized these noble families as permanently related to the imperial family whereas the families of the spouses might change from one generation to the next.⁵⁷

However, the list of relatives is absent from the previous versions of the work which are under the slight different title of *Zuxunlu* 祖訓錄 (Ancestral Injunctions). The versions of the regulations were carefully studied and compared by modern scholar Huang Zhangjian.⁵⁸ Further research by Tan Jiaqi updating this work suggested the possible causes as the death of the heir apparent, the misconduct of the imperial princes and the emperor's adjustments to political organization in regard to the imperial descendants.⁵⁹ However, the marital relatives who also played roles in the state and family organization are generally overlooked. As reflected by the *Huang Ming Zuxun* the Hongwu emperor saw the marriages of the imperial princes as one of the means to incorporate meritorious officials into a powerful and permanent position

⁵⁵ Referred as “the family of duke of state Wei”. The title was inherited by Li Jinglong 李景隆 (1369-1424) the son of Li Wenzhong in Hongwu 19.

⁵⁶ Referred as “the family of the Marquis of Xiping”. The title was inherited by Mu Chun 沐春 (?) the son of Mu Ying in Hongwu 26.

⁵⁷ All five families lasted to the end of the dynasty. See Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 105: 3000–3074.

⁵⁸ Huang Zhangjian, “Lun Huang Ming Zuxunlu Banxing Niandai Bing Lun Mingchu Fengjian Zhuwang Zhidu.”

⁵⁹ Tan Jiaqi, “Cong Taizu Huangdi Qinlu Kan Ming Taizu Xiuding Zuxunlu de Yuanyin.”

within the imperial clan. Therefore the lack of attention on marital relatives inevitably led to an incomplete view of the imperial family and its development as related to political change in the Hongwu reign.

It is noteworthy that the emperor did not introduce the list of relatives to the *Zuxunlu* in Hongwu 14 (1381) in the middle stage (Hongwu 8-Hongwu 26) of the reign when he only selected the in-laws of the imperial princes among those who could be their aids to enter into the military power. Instead he composed the list in Hongwu 28 during the last stage of the reign when he married more than half of the imperial princes with daughters of lower ranked officials. The difference in the directions of the operations over the structures of family and state is observable in the two stages: between the Hongwu 8 and Hongwu 26 the emperor intended to graft the imperial princes to the government and their marriage with daughters of selected nobles was one of his tools; nevertheless at the end of the reign in the *Huang Ming Zuxun* he formally integrated the marital relatives into the imperial family. These changes reflect the development in the emperor's organization of the hierarchies of the imperial family and government. The imperial princes and their marital relatives formed the intersection of the two hierarchies during the Hongwu reign. The emperor's changing vision of his family and state determined the shape of this intersection. To investigate the emperor's developing vision during the Hongwu reign, the following section will examine the fates and roles of the in-laws of imperial princes with special reference to the purges of officials.

FATES OF IN-LAWS OF EMPEROR'S CHILDREN IN THE PURGES
OF OFFICIALS

There were several purges of officials spanning over the Hongwu reign, each involving up to tens of thousands of deaths. The first purge was the aforementioned purge of the office of grand councillor followed the execution of Hu Weiyong 胡惟庸 (?-1380), the last person who held this position. Many of Hu's alleged associates were also executed immediately after his imprisonment in Hongwu 12 (1379), such as the right (vice) censor-in-chief (右御史大夫) Chen Ning 陳寧 (?-1380) and the earl of loyalty and diligence (忠勤伯) Wang Guangyang 汪廣洋 (?-1379) who was the right (vice) grand councillor.⁶⁰ However the emperor spared the life of the civil duke Li Shanchang when the court demanded his prosecution in Hongwu 13 (1380). At the time the emperor recalled his first meeting with Li Shanchang, suggesting that Li was "organ and flesh of [my force] since the beginning of my uprising" so "I could not bear to punish him".⁶¹ In the following several years Li remained in the same official position and even took on additional responsibility for the censorate.⁶²

⁶⁰ Chen Ning was considered to be one of the closest associates in the Hu Weiyong's trial, especially for poisoning Liu Ji and for plotting rebellion. The biographies of Hu and Chen were placed together at the beginning of the section "evil officials" (奸臣) in the *Mingshi*. Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 308:7906–7909. Wang Guangyang was ennobled in 1370 (Hongwu 3); he was accused of concealing Hu's crimes, see his biography *Ibid.*, 127:3773–3775.

⁶¹ “吾初起時腹心股肱”，“吾不忍罪之” in *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 129:2048. Li's family were tied to Hu's family by multiple marriages and Li was persuaded to assist in Hu's plot. According to the *Veritable Records* it seems to be known that Li was involved in the Hu's case in Hongwu 13 however it was not clear what sort of evidences were gathered then. Li's biography in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 127:3769–3773. See also *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 129:2045–2046.

⁶² Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 127:3769–3773.

However ten years later in Hongwu 23 (1390) Li Shanchang was forced to commit suicide and his entire clan were decapitated.⁶³ This resulted from his case being revisited with additional evidences gathered by investigating censors (監察御史) and new testimony being given by Li Shanchang's own family servant on Li's involvement in the case of Hu Weiyong. The latter drew the emperor's attention as the family servant suggested that Li Shanchang had been a key figure in the clique plotting rebellion together with Hu Weiyong and several other nobles.⁶⁴ Suspicions of the validity of these accusations were aroused as early as the following year (Hongwu 24, 1391) by Wang Guoyong 王國用, a director (*langzhong* 郎中) of the Bureau of Forestry and Crafts (*yubu* 虞部). The emperor neither replied nor punished Wang Guoyong for the memorial he presented.⁶⁵ Following the death of Li Shanchang a further 22 ennobled meritorious officials that had been listed as part of Hu's clique received differing degrees of punishment though all of the 8 still alive were executed.⁶⁶ By contrast in Hongwu 13 when Hu's crimes first came to light only one military noble, i.e. Zhu Zuliang was killed because of his own crime committed in Guangdong. As a matter of fact by the end of Hongwu 22 (1392), that is, in the first two decades of the Hongwu reign there were only six nobles who had been sentenced to death. The

⁶³ For Li's suicide see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 202:3026–3027. His clan being decapitated is recorded in his biography, Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 127: 3769–3773.

⁶⁴ The investigating censor reported that Li Shanchang concealed the capture of the envoy sent by Hu Weiyong to the Yuan forces for plotting rebellion. For both reports see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 202:3023–3024.

⁶⁵ At the end of Li's biography in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 127: 3773. The memorial of Wang Guoyong was presented by Xie Jin 解縉 (1369–1415) who was consequently sent away by emperor from his official post, however without further punishment. See Xie's biography *Ibid.*, 147:4119.

⁶⁶ For the nobles implicated in the Hongwu 23 clique and the punishment they received see Massey, "Chu Yuan-Chang and the Hu-Lan Cases of the Early Ming Dynasty," 189–197.

purge in Hongwu 23, causing the death of ennobled meritorious officials, was the first of its scale in the reign.⁶⁷

The number of nobles' deaths dropped in the following two years, only to climb up to a second peak as a result of the purge in Hongwu 26 (1393). The central figure of this purge was Lan Yu (蓝玉 ?-1393), a general who had been first appointed as Marquis of Yongchang in Hongwu 12 (1380) and promoted to Duke of State Liang in Hongwu 21 (1388). Lan Yu was also accused of organizing a rebellion with fourteen implicated meritorious officials. As in Hongwu 23, the emperor executed all seven of the implicated nobles who were still alive. The discussions of the purges among historians began as early as the late Ming, when details of the purges were recovered from fragments of the court documents transmitted during the Hongwu reign. However it was after the collapse of imperial system in republication period that the focus of the scholarship shifted from the cliques to the emperor. Wu Han postulated that the main factors behind the purges were the emperor's desire to secure his rule and his murderous cruelty. Wu's view had a great impact on later researchers whose arguments mainly focussed on what kind of threats motivated the emperor to purge the ennobled meritorious officials.⁶⁸

Within this scholarship there is a general lack of differentiation between the causes of the two purges. This is likely to be influenced by Zhu Yuanzhang's own words. Zhu Yuanzhang claimed that Lan Yu had shown no sign of repenting though

⁶⁷ For more statistics over the death of meritorious officials see Zhu Hong, "Ming Taizu Zhuyi Gongcheng de Yuanyin," 51–52.

⁶⁸ Wu Han, "Hu Weiyong Dang'an Kao." For a full review of the research on the purges and the influence of Wu Han see Massey, "Chu Yuan-Chang and the Hu-Lan Cases of the Early Ming Dynasty," 5–14.

being exempted from the punishment for his known involvement in Hu Weiyong's clique. He further suggested that the nobles of Lan Yu's clique also belonged to the Hu's former clique.⁶⁹ These accusations were apparently aimed at demonstrating that Lan Yu and the other nobles did not deserve any further chance as they all had a history of plotting rebellion. Research such as Wu Han's, however, starts from the perspective that in the two purges the emperor targeted nobles belonging to the same group, and that thus the purges were of a similar, if not the same, nature.

Furthermore, difficulties are observable in the couple of attempts to differentiate between the purges spanning from Hongwu 13 to the end of the Hongwu reign although it is clear that Hongwu 23 was a critical turning point. For example in Zhu Hong's study which challenged Wu and argued that the unacceptable behaviour of the meritorious officials was one of the main causes of the two purges, the deaths of meritorious officials were counted for each year of the reign. This method demonstrated that the sudden increase of official deaths through purges was not in Hongwu 13, but in Hongwu 23.⁷⁰ The differentiation between the two years of Hongwu 23 and 26 is only reflected in a recent work by Li Xinfeng. Li detected a major difference between the years of appointment of the nobles who were implicated in these two years. The majority of the nobles implicated in Hongwu 23 were those who were appointed in Hongwu 3, whereas in Hongwu 26 the main targets were those who received their nobility in the middle of the reign. By examining the Hu-Lan cases, Li has provided a key insight that there were at least three groups of nobles towards whom the Emperor held varied attitudes, i.e. those who were purged in Hongwu 23,

⁶⁹ See Zhu Yuanzhang's own preface to the collected testimony of trial of Lan Yu, Zhu Yuanzhang, *Nichen Lu*, 1–2.

⁷⁰ Zhu Hong, "Ming Taizu Zhuyi Gongcheng de Yuanyin," 59.

those were targeted in Hongwu 26 and those who survived. His research provides a basis for a further analysis of the difference in the former two groups.⁷¹ The probe into the fates of the in-laws of the emperor's children sheds light on the significance of time by offering an additional factor behind the political processes in Hongwu 23 and 26. Zhu Yuanzhang bitterly lamented after the execution of Lan Yu:

This Lan Yu from an early age served under (the king of) Kaiping (posthumous title of Chang Yuchun) [...] [Therefore when he had] formerly participated in Hu and Chen's plot, taking into the consideration the meritorious deeds of (the king of) Kaiping and [Lan's] relation [by marriage to the imperial family], I forgave him and did not enquire into [his crime].

其藍玉，幼隸開平……初與胡陳之謀，朕思開平之功及親親之故，宥而不問。⁷²

Lan Yu had multiple relations with the imperial family. Lan Yu's sister married Chang Yuchun, whose daughter was the consort of the heir apparent Zhu Biao. Another relation was Lan's daughter's marriage to the Prince of Shu (朱椿 1378-1423). In Lan Yu's case Zhu Yuanzhang's comment suggested that it was possible for him to exempt people from punishments because of their long term service and their relations to the imperial family by marriage. Similar expressions can be found in the decree from Zhu

⁷¹ Apparently Li noted this differentiation and he stressed a distinction between "old nobles" (appointed in Hongwu 3) and "new nobles" (appointed later) when the purges in Hongwu 23 and 26 were compared. But his essay had a different focus on the reasons for the few nobles who survived up to the end of the reign. Li Xinfeng 李新峰, "Ming Chu Xungui Paixi Yu Hu Lan Dangan" 明初勳貴派系與胡藍黨案 (Factions of Nobles in Early Ming and the Trials of Hu and Lan). *Zhongguoshi Yanjiu*, 4, 2011, 145–58.

⁷² Zhu Yuanzhang, *Nichen Lu*, 1–2.

Yuanzhang to Li Shanchang on an early occasion when the emperor ordered that only a decrease in Li's salary ought to be imposed for a charge that could justifiably lead to death penalty:

I regard the length of your service [and] the weight of [our] relationship through [the] marriage [of our children] highly, [therefore I] bent the law to forgive [you].

朕憫相從之久，思姻親之重，枉法以恕。⁷³

Also in the warning to Duke of State Song Feng Sheng about the misbehaviours of Feng's family members, the emperor said:

Since your brothers followed me from the beginning of my enterprise, both [of you] had meritorious deeds, also there is affection [between us] from [our] relationship by [the] marriage [of our children], I do not bear to forget [the above] and I say this to you [to warn you].

朕以卿昆弟相從於開創之初，具有功勞，且有姻親之愛，故不忍忘爾為卿言之。⁷⁴

Li Shanchang's son married the princess Li'an and Feng Sheng's daughter married the Prince of Zhou. The above three examples illustrate a variety of circumstances: the first was after the execution of Lan Yu; the second was remitting

⁷³ Zhu Yuanzhang, "Yu Taishi Li Shanchang."

⁷⁴ The older brother of Feng Sheng, Feng Guoyong 馮國用 (1323-1358) also served in Zhu Yuanzhang's army in founding the dynasty. The words are quoted from *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 233:3400.

death punishment (for Li Shanchang) and the third was a warning before potential punishment (for Feng Sheng). At these different stages of the legal procedure the relationships by marriage were stressed together with long term service. Hence it is likely that the emperor did take the kin by marriage into account when he considered applying severe punishments to the meritorious officials. Though from a retrospective view many of the in-laws of his children were still killed, the emperor's consideration of his kin by marriage did differentiate the years of Hongwu 23 and 26.

In total the emperor only selected eighteen nobles to be in-laws of his children. Four families of the ennobled in-laws were left untouched at the end of the reign, the second generation of four families were charged with crimes of different degrees and the remaining ten were permanently abolished.⁷⁵ Among the abolished families, three in-laws were charged posthumously and seven were eliminated. In particular all the posthumous charges were made in Hongwu 23 whereas the majority of elimination (five of seven) happened in three consecutive years of Hongwu 26, 27 and 28 (1393, 1394 and 1395). Therefore one main difference between the year Hongwu 23

⁷⁵ The fates of the families related to the Hongwu imperial princes and princesses can be found in

Table I-2 and

Table I-3 (both appended to the chapter). In addition to the 17 noble family listed in the two tables, there was also the family of Chang Yuchun whose daughter married to the emperor's oldest son. Chang Yuchun's oldest son was punished in Hongwu 24.

and Hongwu 26 is that though both of them caused great change in the state hierarchy, the latter led to a more active and deliberate focus on the intersection between the imperial family and state – the in-laws of the emperor's children.

The differentiation is also manifested in the types of relationships that the nobles had with the imperial family, that is, whether they were in-laws of imperial princes or princesses. The marriage policy that the emperor employed for princesses was generally different from that of imperial princes. His selections of commandant-escorts (husbands of princesses) were not necessarily linked to their background throughout the reign. Seven out of sixteen daughters of the emperor were married off to families of nobles. However no noble's children were matched up with both princesses and imperial princes until the later period of the reign. In Hongwu 27 the marriage of the daughter of Guo Ying with the Prince of Liao (Zhu Zhi 朱植 1377-1424) made Guo the only noble who was an in-law of Zhu Yuanzhang's children of both gender. In the following year the emperor listed Guo Ying in the *Huang Ming Zuxun* as a relative. The emperor included all the three remaining ennobled marital relatives of imperial princes in the list. In contrast the father-in-law of princess Fuqing 福清 (1370-1417), the Marquis of Fengxiang Zhang Long 張龍 (?-1397) was left out.

⁷⁶ Hence the emperor did not regard the in-laws of his daughters and sons equally: rather, they were separate groups. The subsequent inclusion of Guo Ying along with other in-laws of imperial princes in the *Huang Ming Zuxun* further demonstrated that the marital relation of the patriarchal family line was more significant.

⁷⁶ Zhang Long died in Hongwu 30 (1397), see his biography in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 130: 3827–3828.

In Hongwu 23 (1390) when the purge of meritorious official centred on Li Shanchang, two executed in-laws were both linked by the marriage of princesses (Li and Lu Zhongheng 陸仲亨, 1336-1390). Apart from Li and Lu, the first generation of the other four implicated noble families related to the imperial children were all already dead. Three were charged posthumously with their title abolished, for the family of Deng Yu, his oldest son who inherited the title was executed. On the other hand there were no further harm to any living in-laws of emperor's children beside Li and Lu in Hongwu 23. In particular none of the living in-laws of imperial princes were affected in Hongwu 23. Evidentially the emperor preserves most of the in-laws of his children with favour to those of his sons. In other words, in the attack centred on the in-laws of princesses in Hongwu 23 the damage to imperial relatives by children's marriage was relatively moderate, especially for the families in which the first generations were still alive.

The remaining ennobled families of imperial relatives lived on peacefully for another couple of years. Then from Hongwu 26 when Lan Yu was targeted, more than half of the in-laws that were still alive were abolished, all with first generation nobles being eliminated. Between Hongwu 26 and Hongwu 28 (1395) the emperor eliminated five ennobled in-laws of his children, and of these four were related through imperial princes. Hence the purge in Hongwu 26, centring on the in-laws of imperial princes, actually marked the start of the emperor's substantial revision to the composition of his family regarding the in-laws of his children. Therefore the purges of Hongwu 23 and 26 were of very different natures from the perspective of family hierarchy, especially with regard to the in-laws of imperial princes.

There were ten ennobled families related to imperial princes by marriage by Hongwu 23. Three of them were implicated in the purge of Hongwu 23, and in all of which the first generation died before the purge. Five were punished after Hongwu 26, and four of the first generation nobles were eliminated at that time. Before Hongwu 26 the connections between imperial princes and the first generation of nobles who were their in-laws always ceased naturally. In contrast, from Hongwu 26 the emperor forcefully demolished the majority of the surviving connections.⁷⁷ The two noble families remaining from Hongwu 26 were those of Xu Da and Tang He. Both appear in the list of imperial relatives in the *Hung Ming zuxun* along with Guo Ying who became the in-law of the Prince of Liao in Hongwu 27. The composition of the imperial family/clan regarding the in-laws of imperial princes was obviously a great concern of the emperor who decided to apply major adjustments from Hongwu 26.

The emperor's adjustment to the imperial family from Hongwu 26 appears to be caused by the accidental death of the emperor's oldest son, the former heir apparent Zhu Biao, in Hongwu 25 (1392). Zhu Biao's death was certainly a disastrous loss to Zhu Yuanzhang who had prepared for his succession ever since the beginning of the reign. One of the most worrying consequences is that the imperial grandson Zhu Yunwen selected as the new heir apparent did not fit as well as his father in the composition of the family and the state to function as its core. The powerful supporters of Zhu Biao such as the imperial princes and their in-laws then became potential threats to his son Yunwen. Lan Yu was the one whose position was changed most dramatically by this incident: he was the uncle by marriage of Biao, the father-in-law

⁷⁷ This is a general remark which is valid despite two special cases: the first generation of Duke of Yingshan, Yu Xian was invested posthumously after he was made the in-laws of the Prince of Tan and the Prince of Xiang was married to the daughter of Duke of Jinghai, Wu Zhen after his death (Wu's son inherited the title).

of Biao's brother. With Biao's death Lan Yu was two generations superior to Yunwen in the family structure yet without being a blood relation. Zhu Yuanzhang possibly struggled between different options for enhancing the position of his new heir in the structure of the family and the state. In the twelfth month of Hongwu 25, he designated Lan Yu as one of the two grand mentors of his heir apparent (太子太傅). Two grand preceptors of the heir apparent (太子太師) and two grand guardian of heir apparent (太子太保) were appointed at the same time. The six were all nobles.⁷⁸ Lan Yu held the position for no more than three months before he was eliminated in the second month of Hongwu 26.⁷⁹ By Hongwu 28 (1395) the blood relative of the emperor, Li Jinglong 李景隆 (1369-1424, son of Li Wenzhong) was the only surviving member of the designated group of nobles. Apparently between the appointment of the new heir apparent and the purge of Lan Yu the emperor experimented with an alternative plan to organize the nobles to support his grandson. Yet this was eventually withdrawn: the structure of the state as well as the imperial family was trimmed for the new heir.

CONCLUSION

This chapter deals with the political situation underlying the development of the marriage rituals of imperial princes. From the *wen* aspect the emperor's peculiar theory of ritual can be summarized as ritual highly depends on its political context, and the guiding principle was thought to be human sentiment. The period for establishing a ritual institution for the dynasty was regarded a generation and the ultimate goal for this institution was to achieve ideal governance. With the above understanding at the

⁷⁸ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 223: 3265–3266.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 223: 3296–3297.

end of the first decade the emperor discarded the rituals of mourning clothes and grand sacrifices proposed by his Confucian officials who were considered to have been sticking rigidly to the regulations of antiquity. The emperor in turn re-structured the government, centralising power and implementing his own ideal governance. Almost around the same period the *wu* aspect also entered a new era, the oldest imperial princes came of age and were about to be sent off to guard their principalities. The emperor married the imperial princes off to daughters of selected nobles from the end of first decade to the middle of the third decade when the government underwent another round of re-organization with two purges of nobles, the majority of whom were military officials. The marriage rituals for imperial princes mediated the developments in the *wen* and *wu* aspects with the two transitional points in Hongwu 8 (1375) and Hongwu 26 (1393).

In the first stage (Hongwu 1-8, 1368-1375) the marriage rituals for imperial princes took their initial forms in the prescriptions published in the first year and the third year. From the fourth year onwards the sons of the emperor began to get married. The heir apparent was married to the daughter of the deceased Duke of State E (鄂國公 Chang Yuchun 常遇春, 1330-1369), and the Prince of Qin to the younger sister of the Mongolian general KöKö Temür; both in the fourth year. In the sixth year the Prince of Jin was married to the daughter of Xie Cheng 謝成 (?-1394) who was only ennobled as Marquis of Yongping (永平侯) six years later (Hongwu 12, 1379). According to the *Veritable Records* the marriage ritual for the heir apparent was heavily under the influence of the early prescriptions and precedents of previous dynasties. The first marriage ritual for the Prince of Qin were only briefly mentioned and there was no record of the Prince of Jin's at all.

The second stage began with the Prince of Qin's marriage to his secondary consort, the daughter of Duke of State Wei, in the eighth year. The ritual for this marriage was recorded in detail. This was unique among all of the imperial princes' marriages in the entire Hongwu reign. The adjusted practice of this marriage ritual occurred one year after the emperor's revising of the codes for mourning clothes. In other words this detailed update is likely to be a result of the emperor's interference. Hence the update are likely to have been aimed at, if not fully achieving appropriateness in the mind of the emperor. The marriage between the Prince of Qin and his secondary consort was the first match up of imperial prince with an ennobled meritorious official. Between the eighth year and the twenty-sixth year the emperor married all the imperial princes to daughters of meritorious officials who either were holding a noble title or would be granted one soon after. There were no known updates of the marriage rituals from Hongwu 8 (1375) to Hongwu 26 (1393).

In Hongwu 26 and 27 (1394) two revisions were applied to the marriage rituals for imperial princes and princesses. There were no marriages which occurred between the productions of the two sets of prescriptions. Yet between the compilations of the two sets of prescriptions the Hongwu emperor started to eliminate the ennobled in-laws of imperial princes. Thereupon the emperor selected the consorts for the imperial family members from several provinces in the north.⁸⁰ After the Hongwu 27 revision to the marriage rituals, some imperial princes began to be linked to in-laws who were non-military officials ranked at 6a.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 231:3376.

At the end of the Hongwu reign, the emperor formally recognized the living ennobled in-laws of the imperial princes were permanently as imperial relatives and granted them power to interfere in the business of the imperial clan. Among them Xu Da had four sons and three daughters, yet he was an in-law of three imperial princes whereas none of his sons married any princesses.⁸¹ Similarly Tang He had two daughters married to the Prince of Lu while none of his five sons married any princesses.⁸² Therefore the complete separation of groups of in-laws for princesses and imperial princes before Hongwu 27 was not due to the lack of potential candidates. Rather it was more likely that the emperor's selections of in-laws for his daughters and sons followed different policies which caused the differentiation. As for the special figure Guo Ying, his sister was the imperial Consort Ning who took charge of the palace from around Hongwu 18 (1385) and his son married the Princess of Yongjia in Hongwu 22 (1389).⁸³ Despite this an additional relation by marriage with the Prince of Liao was made in Hongwu 27 before his inclusion in the *Huang Ming Zuxun*. Evidently in the vision of the Hongwu emperor, for noble families the connections with imperial princes by marriage were more significant than other types of marital relations with himself or his family members.⁸⁴ However these connections are insufficiently investigated in the overall picture of the history of the Hongwu period.

⁸¹ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 125: 3730.

⁸² *Ibid.*, 126:3766.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 113:3509.

⁸⁴ It is difficult to judge the significance of the marital relatives of the heir apparent. The family of Chang Yuchun whose daughter married Zhu Biao was implicated in the purge of Lan Yu. Although the family's noble title wasn't abolished the family was not listed in the *Huang Ming Zuxun*. It is possible that the Chang family was under suspicion as their daughter wasn't the birth mother of the imperial grandson. However it turns out that the common feature of all of the ennobled marital relatives listed in the *Huang Ming Zuxun* was that they were all related to imperial princes by marriage. Generally speaking the significance of being imperial princes' in-laws should not be undermined even if it is of equal significance with being the in-law of the heir apparent.

The relations between the emperor and his meritorious officials were studied extensively through investigation of the purges. The relations between the emperor and imperial princes are also an established topic of research through existing materials such as *Zuxunlu*. The tensions in the transferring of the military power from nobles to imperial princes have also been explored. Yet little attention has been given to the processes of the emperor's construction and destruction of the mutual relations between nobles and imperial princes by marriages.

This chapter reveals that the timings of the revisions to the marriage ritual for imperial princes corresponded to the timings of changes in the emperor's marriage policy for them which were responses to developments in the political sphere. At the two transitional points in the reign the emperor defined new appropriateness for the rituals according to human sentiment, that is to say the political context in which the marriages took place. The political reality was perceived by the emperor who then postulated a blueprint for the advantages for his family. At the first transitional point (Hongwu 8) he decided that selected nobles should be connected to the oldest imperial princes to support their preparing for their dispatching to their principalities. Two decades later the sudden death of the heir apparent devastated this blueprint. Many of these connections were transformed from supports to potential threats. Hence at the second transitional point the emperor adopted at least three different strategies to tackle the flaws in the blueprint: eliminations of threatening nobles, the selection of the lower statuses in-laws for imperial princes, and the official recognition of the remaining ennobled in-laws of imperial princes as permanent imperial relatives. Therefore the updates to the marriage rituals for imperial princes should be seen as the embodiment of the emperor's adjustments to his family blueprint as a result of perceived changes in reality. The developing of marriage rituals for imperial princes

in the Hongwu reign was a means used by the emperor to enhance and clarify his adjustments to connections between the imperial princes and their marital relatives.

Table I-1 Marriages of the imperial princes during the Hongwu reign (1368-1398)

	Imperial The Prince of	Year of Dispatch	Year of Marriage (Age)	In-laws	Year of the In-laws being Ennobled (Promoted)	Year of the In-laws being Punished (Death Punishment or Abolished)
1	The Prince of Qin 秦王 1356-1359	Hongwu 11	Hongwu 4 (15)	KöKö Temür	-	-
	The Prince of Jin 晉王 1358-1398	Hongwu 11, 4 th moon	Hongwu 6 (15)	Marquis of Yongping Xie Cheng 永平侯謝成	Hongwu 12	Hongwu 27
2	The Prince of Qin 秦王 (secondary consort)	Hongwu 11	Hongwu 8 (19)	Duke of State Wei Deng Yu 衛國公鄧愈	Hongwu 3	His son Deng Zhan 鄧鎮 who inherited the title, was executed in Hongwu 23 (trial of Li Shanchang).
	The Prince of Yan 燕王 1360-1424	Hongwu 13	Hongwu 9 (16)	Duke of State Wei Xu Da 魏國公徐達	Hongwu 3	-
	The Prince of Zhou 周王 1361-1425	Hongwu 14	Hongwu 10 (16)	Duke of State Song 宋國公馮勝	Hongwu 3	Hongwu 28
	The Prince of Chu 楚王	Hongwu 14	Hongwu 12 (15)	Marquis of Dingyuan Wang Bi 定遠侯王弼	Hongwu 12 (Hongwu 17 increased salary)	Hongwu 27

1364-1424						
The Prince of Qi 齊王 1364-1428	Hongwu 15	Hongwu 12 (15)	Marquis of Anlu Wu Fu 安陸侯吳復	Hongwu 12		His son Wu Jie 吳傑 who inherited the title, was exiled in Hongwu 28(trial of Li Shanchang).
The Prince of Lu 魯王 1370-1390	Hongwu 18, 10 th moon	Hongwu 18 (15)	Duke of State Xin Tang He 信國公湯和	Marquis of Zhongshan in Hongwu 3. (Promoted to Duke in Hongwu 11).		
The Prince of Tan 潭王 1369-1390	Hongwu 18	Hongwu 18 (16)	Marquis of Yingshan Yu Xian 英山侯於顯	Hongwu 20 (Posthumous)		His family was involved in Trial of Li Shanchang and The Prince of Tan committed suicide in Hongwu 23.
The Prince of Xiang 湘王 1371-1399	Hongwu 18	Hongwu 18 (14)	Marquis of Jinghai Wu Zhong (younger sister) 靖海侯吳忠	Hongwu 17 (Inherited from his father Wu Zhen 吳禎 [1328-1379], who received the title in Hongwu 3)		Abolished in Hongwu 23 (Trial of Li Shanchang).
The Prince of Shu 蜀王 1371-1423	Hongwu 23	Hongwu 18 (14)	Marquis of Yongchang Lan Yu 永昌侯藍玉	Hongwu 12		Hongwu 26
The Prince of Lu 魯王 1370-1390	Hongwu 18	Hongwu 20 to Tang's second daughter (17)	Duke of State Xin Tang He 信國公家湯和	Hongwu 3 (promoted in Hongwu 11)		
The Prince of Dai 代王 1374-1446	Hongwu 25	Hongwu 24 (17)	Duke of State Wei Xu Da 魏國公徐達	Hongwu 3		-

3	The Prince of Liao 遼王 1377-1424	Hongwu 26	Hongwu 27 (17)	Marquis of Wuding Guo Ying 武定侯家郭英	Hongwu 17	
	The Prince of Ning 寧王 1378-1444	Hongwu 26	Hongwu 27 (16)	Warden Zhang Tai (Ranked 6a) 兵馬指揮張泰	-	
	The Prince of Qing 慶王 1378-1438	Hongwu 26	Hongwu 27 (16)	Commander (Ranked 6a) Sun Jida 指揮孫繼達	-	
	The Prince of Su 肅王 1376-1420	Hongwu 28	Hongwu 27 (18)	Commander (Ranked 6a) Sun Jida 指揮孫繼達	-	
	The Prince of Gu 谷王 1379-1428	Hongwu 28	Hongwu 28 (16)	(Warden Zhou Feng) 兵馬指揮周鋒	-	
	The Prince of Min 岷王 1379-1450		Hongwu 28 (16)	(Promoted from 都督僉事 rank 2a to Rank 1a in 7 th moon of Hongwu 26 juan 229) 都督袁洪	-	
	The Prince of Han 韓王 1380-1407		Hongwu 29 (16)	Left Commissioner-in-chief (Rank 1a Promoted in Hongwu 25) Son of the deceased Duke of Yingguo (Feng Guoyong)	-	

				Nephew of Feng Sheng, did not inherit the title. 右都督馮誠 (鄧國公馮國用之子)		
	The Prince of Shen 瀋王 1380-1431		Hongwu 29 (16)	Commander (Ranked 6a) Zhang Jie 指揮張傑	-	
	The Prince of Qin 秦王 1380-1412 (second generation)		Hongwu 29 (16)	Shaanxi military commissioner Liu Sui (Rank 2a) 陝西都指揮使劉遂	-	

Table I-2 Ennobled in-laws of the Hongwu imperial princes and princesses that were unpunished during the Hongwu reign

First generation nobles	In-laws of imperial princes	In-laws of princess	Listed in <i>Huang Ming Zuxun</i>	Year of death
Xu Da 徐達	The Prince of Yan/Dai/An		Y	Hongwu 18
Tang He 湯和	The Prince of Lu (Two daughters)		Y	Hongwu 28
Zhang Long 張龍		The Princess of Fuqing	N	Hongwu 30
Guo Ying 郭英	The Prince of Liao	The Princess of Yongjia	Y	Yongle 1

Table I-3 Ennobled in-laws of the Hongwu imperial princes and princesses that were punished during the Hongwu reign

First generation nobles	In-laws of imperial princes	In-laws of princess	Eliminated	Year of Punishment	Year of death	Charged Posthumously	Son charged	Abolished
Li Shanchang 李善長		The Princess of Lin'an	E	Hongwu 23	23			A
Lu Zhongheng 陸仲亨		The Princess of Runing	E	Hongwu 23	23			A
Deng Yu 鄧愈	The Prince of Qin			Hongwu 23	10		S	
Wu Zhen 吳禎	The Prince of Xiang			Hongwu 23	12	P		A
Mei Sizu 梅思祖		The Princess of Ningguo		Hongwu 23	15	P		A
Yu Xian 於顯	The Prince of Tan			Hongwu 23	18	P		A
Hu Hai 胡海		The Princess of Nankang		Hongwu 26	24		S	
Lan Yu 藍玉	The Prince of Shu		E	Hongwu 26	26			A
Xie Cheng 謝成	The Prince of Jin		E	Hongwu 26	26			A
Wang Bi 王弼	The Prince of Chu		E	Hongwu 26	26			A
Fu Youde 傅友德		The Princess of Shouchun	E	Hongwu 27	27			A
Feng Sheng 馮勝	The Prince of Zhou		E	Hongwu 28	28			A
Wu Fu 吳復	The Prince of Qi			Hongwu 28	16		S	

Chapter II.

Stage One (Hongwu 1-8): Scale of the Marriage Rituals

The Hongwu emperor, Zhu Yuanzhang 朱元璋 (1328-1398) famously originated from the bottom of the social hierarchy, being born into a family of “desperately poor tenant farmers”.¹ In 1352, the homeless Zhu Yuanzhang presented himself to a nearby military force rebelling against the Mongolian Yuan government (1271-1368).² During his second year in the force Zhu Yuanzhang became acquainted Li Shanchang 李善長 (1314-1390), the first advisor who could converse with him about history and ritual.³ Thereafter Zhu Yuanzhang became eager to recruit civil officials. In 1359 Zhu Yuanzhang founded the Office of Confucian Academies assembling some of the most eminent scholars of the time, including Song Lian 宋濂 (1310-1381) and Liu Ji 劉基 (1311-1375).⁴ In 1364, when a fuller structure of offices was established, Zhu Yuanzhang was able to make the statement:

Rituals and laws are the networks sustaining the state [...]

When a state is being newly established, they constitute the first order of priority.

¹ Mote, “The Rise of the Ming Dynasty, 1330–1367,” 11.

² Ibid., 44–46.

³ Ibid., 48. The biography of Li Shanchang in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 127: 3769–3777.

⁴ Mote, “The Rise of the Ming Dynasty, 1330–1367,” 55. A *junxue* 郡學 (prefectural academy) was set up in 1359 and a *lixianguan* 禮賢館 (academic office of virtuous people) was founded in 1363. *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 1:7. Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 1:7, 11. The biographies of Song Lian and Liu Ji in Ibid., 128:3784–2788, 128:3777–3782..

禮法，國之綱紀……建國初，此為先務。⁵

This was put into practice as soon as the foundation of the Ming dynasty was declared in 1368 (Hongwu 1) with the emperor Zhu Yuanzhang rushing into the establishment of bureaus governing rites and music.

During this time prescriptions for different rituals were produced one after another for the new dynasty. The first set of prescriptions for marriage rituals were compiled for the heir apparent, imperial princes, ranked officials and commoners in the twelfth moon of Hongwu 1 (1368).⁶ In this set of the prescriptions only the conversations in the rituals for imperial princes were prescribed, the whole procedure was prescribed as “all the same as [those in the marriage ritual] for the heir apparent”.⁷ The next set came out two years later as the *Mingjili* 明集禮 (Collected Rituals of the Ming), with two additional entries for emperor and princesses and a differentiation between the heir apparent and imperial princes.

As the first comprehensive set of ritual prescriptions of the dynasty, the *Mingjili* 明集禮 explicitly reviewed the rituals from the Han to the Song. Among all of the extant official prescriptions the *Mingjili* is the only set known to include such reviews before the new prescriptions.⁸ The scales referred to by the reviews and the

⁵*Ming Taizu Shilu*, 1:176.

⁶ Ibid., 37: 711–734. It was after the compilation of prescriptions for capping in the eleventh moon. Ibid., 694–705. It was before the complications in prescriptions for receiving tributes from rulers of vassal states, which were compiled for the first practices of such rituals in the ninth moon of Hongwu 2. Ibid., 45: 884–903.

⁷ Ibid., 37:733–734: 俱與皇太子婚禮同.

⁸ There were similar types of prescriptions. For example the Song dynasty *Taichang Yingeli* 太常因革禮 (Received and Reformed Rituals of the Court of Imperial Sacrifices) consisted of the prescriptions from the *Kaibao Tongli* 開寶通禮 (The Complete Rituals of Kaibao [reign 968 -976]) and its later developments. However the *Mingjili* is the first one of its type. For more details of other

prescriptions for marriage rituals of the *Mingjili* do not concur with each other. So the Hongwu 1 set, the review and the prescriptions of the *Mingjili* demonstrate three different strategies in scaling marriage rituals.

The scaling of marriage rituals had existed since the initial stage of the official prescriptions. As one of the pioneers of compiling official ritual prescriptions, Cao Bao 曹褒 (?-102AD) of the Eastern Han (25-220) completed “regulations of [rituals for] capping, marriage, and the auspicious and ill-omened, endings and beginnings of life, graded from the son of heaven down to the commoners”.⁹ When it came to the Ming (1368-1398), the founding emperor Zhu Yuanzhang considered “clarifying nobility and humility” as the main purpose of ritual institution, hence he “repetitively ordered his Confucian officials to study the former regulations exhaustively [so that for the people] from the court, down to the officials and commoners, [their] ceremonies for capping, marriage, funeral and sacrifice [and] styles of clothes, houses, utensils and households have differences between rankings and the prescriptions are written down [accordingly]”.¹⁰

The idea that rituals should be class specified exists extensively in the Confucian classics transmitted from the Han scholars. For example “the rituals do not [apply] down to the commoners” suggests that there should be a finite range of people

types of prescriptions see Wu Yu, “Lun Zhongwan Tang Guojia Lishu Bianzuan de Xindongxiang dui Songdai de Yingxiang”.

⁹ Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 35:1203.

¹⁰ The emperor emphasised on this purpose as *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 55:1076. Ibid., 243:3529: 累命儒臣歷考舊章上自朝廷，下至臣庶，冠婚喪祭之儀，服舍器用之制，各有等差，著為條格。These grades for distinguishing people of different ranks were likely a means opposed to the Yuan governance under which the ranking differences in these aspects had been blurred. For a detailed study on imposing ranks for clothing see Zhang Jia, *Xin Tianxia Zhi Jiahua: Ming Chu Lidu Gaige Yanjiu*, 81–95.

who practice rituals;¹¹ “son of heaven offering sacrifices to Heaven and Earth, feudal lords offering sacrifices to Grain and Soil, grand masters offering sacrifices to the five gods” suggests that there is a class difference in the types of rituals that should be practiced.¹² It was necessary to scale even single types of ritual according to the statuses of people, as the case for ancestral shrines demonstrates. The regulations stated that “the son of heaven [should have] seven shrines... feudal lords [should have] five shrines... grand masters [should have] three shrines...ordinary officer [should have] one shrine”.¹³

However when the subsequent dynasties needed to produce their own official prescriptions practical challenges arose for compiling a scale for different classes. The first challenge was the matching between the contemporary class categories and those such as the marquises (諸侯), counsellors (大夫) and ordinary officers (士) which, appearing in the ritual classics, had been in use before the establishment of the emperorship. In the earliest extant official prescriptions, the *Kaiyuan Li* (Rituals of Kaiyuan [reign 713-741]) of the Tang (618-907), the numerical ranks for the political hierarchy were incorporated in the scaling system for rituals. For example the marriage rituals were prescribed for the imperial family members as well as officials ranked above three, between four and five and below six.¹⁴ The second challenge was raised by the social-political changes which gradually demanded the scale for the rituals to

¹¹ *Liji Zhushu*, 3: 55: 禮不下庶人.

¹² *Ibid.*, 12: 242: 天子祭天地，諸侯祭社稷，大夫祭五祀.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 12: 241: 天子七廟，.....諸侯五廟，.....大夫三廟，.....士一廟.

¹⁴ For example see the study on the ancestral shrine in the Tang in Gan Huaizhen, *Tangdai Jiamiao Lizhi Yanjiu*.

cover commoners.¹⁵ Prescriptions for commoners' marriages started to appear from the mid Song (960-1279), in the official set of *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi* 政和五禮新儀 (New Etiquettes for the Five Rituals of Zhenghe [reign 1111-1118]). The last challenge was to design appropriate differences for other classes for those rituals which were only defined for a single class in the classics in order to represent the scale of statuses. This challenge and the resulting variations in the official prescriptions have generally been neglected by modern research.

In the classics the general principles for scaling rituals were complex and obscure. For example the grandeur of a ritual could be reflected by its usage of utensils of large or small quantity, big or small sizes, being displaying at a high or low position or with intricate or simple templates, all subject to context-based interpretations.¹⁶ Therefore the scaling of the rituals was a variable aspect within the official prescriptions even though the main flow of a specific ritual more or less stuck to its definition in the ritual classics if available. The main point of reference in the procedures for marriage rituals is the “shi hunli” 士婚禮 (marriage rituals for ordinary officers) chapter in the classic *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Ceremonials). Occasionally in other classics the differences between the marriage rituals for different statuses were mentioned, mainly focusing on symbolic gifts.¹⁷ The scale of the procedure for the marriage rituals is rarely discussed in the classics. As the result, the compilers of the

¹⁵ Yang Zhigang, “Lixia Shuren de Lishi Kaocha.”

¹⁶ *Liji Zhushu*, 23: 451–456.

¹⁷ For example “*gugui* [jade object with patterns like millets], [it measures] seven *cun* [and is] used by the son of heaven to marry [his] lady (wife)” (穀圭, 七寸天子以聘女) and “big *zhang* [jade object in the shape of half of the *gui*] ... [that is] used by feudal lord to marry [his] lady (wife)” (大璋.....諸侯以聘女) in *Zhouli Zhushu*, 41: 633.

official prescriptions received few guidelines and at the same time were less constrained in their scaling of the marriage rituals.

This chapter aims to investigate the reasons behind the varying scale of the marriage rituals during the first stage of the Hongwu reign. The existing research suggests that there was dissent among the ritual compilers of the early Hongwu reign, which was caused by the conflict between the existing practice left by the Yuan and the rituals transmitted from earlier dynasties.¹⁸ However the nobles of the Yuan had their marriage rituals following Mongolian customs. In other words, there was no Yuan model of the scale of marriage rituals. This chapter will reveal that the conflict in the scales of the marriage rituals represented ideological dissent. It will start by examining the peculiar organization of the *Mingjili* and its conflict scales. Then it will recount the evolutions in the scale of marriage rituals from the Tang. This will be followed by a study of the changes in the positions of imperial family members accompanying the publication of the precedent prescriptions. It will finally reach the conclusion that the dissent rooted from the fact that the policy employed by the Hongwu emperor towards the imperial princes deviated from the dynasties when the precedent prescriptions were produced.

¹⁸ Hamashita's research on the sacrifices to the City Gods (城隍) suggested the existence of two groups with conflicting ideas. There were officials who assisted in the founding of the dynasty and occupied the secretariat at the beginning of the Hongwu period. Their background was mostly that of sub official functionaries from the Yuan (represented by Li Shanchang). The other group were the recruited literati who were more professional trained scholars (represented by Xu Yikui). See Hamashita Atsutoshi [Bindao Dunjun], "Zhu Yuanzhang Zhengquan Chenghuang Gaizhi Kao," 9–11. Based on Hamashita's suggestion Zhang speculated that the two different groups were the reason behind the change in the protocols for *mianfu* 冕服 (crowns and robes) from Hongwu 1 to the *Mingjili*. Zhang Zhiyun, "Chongsu Huangquan: Huangwu Shiqi de Mianzhi Guihua," 36–37.

THE *MINGJILI* AND ITS CONFLICT SCALES

Two groups of compilers were appointed to the *Mingjili*. The first group consisted of officials who had long been associated with the government and held high positions, for example Li Shanchang and Song Lian. However, the *Mingjili* was attributed to the head of the other group of the scholars who were recruited specially for this particular work, the scholar Xu Yikui 徐一夔 (1319-ca 1400). Xu had broad knowledge of the classics and declined an official post after the completion of the *Mingjili*.¹⁹ After its completion in Hongwu 3 (1370) the *Mingjili* was held in the imperial archive and it was only published almost two centuries later in the Jiajing 嘉靖 reign (1522-1566).²⁰

The marriage rituals in the official prescriptions were organized by sections for people from high to low classes and then divided into steps which were represented as headings. For example there would be a section for emperor's marriage ritual with steps prescribed as headings one after another, followed by the section for heir apparent with headings for steps and then sections for all other classes in the same style.²¹ The prescribed classes varied in the official prescriptions between different periods. Besides the appending of the commoners' class at the bottom, there were also the elimination of some classes listed formerly and the insertion of new classes in the later prescriptions. In the Tang dynasty, the *Kaiyuan Li* divided ranked officials into

¹⁹ Biography of Xu Yikui in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 285:7322. In Goodrich and Fang, *Dictionary of Ming Biography, 1368-1644*, 589-590.

²⁰ Zhao Kesheng, "Da Mingjili de Chuxiu Yu Kanbu," 65.

²¹ In the Ming prescriptions the marriage rituals for all the statuses are listed together, i.e. from that for emperor, to that for heir apparent, etc. However this is not necessarily the case for its precedents, for example in the *Da Tang Kaiyuanli* all the rituals for one class were bound together, e.g. the marriage ritual for the emperor and all the other court rituals for the emperor were all listed before the prescriptions for the marriage rituals for the heir apparent.

three classes (above rank 3, rank 4 and 5, and below rank 6). Yet in the Song prescriptions (the *Zhenghe Li*), ranked officials were included as one single class while two additional classes of the imperial clan were introduced into the prescriptions: one for the imperial clansmen below the princes and the other for the female descendants of the imperial clan below princesses. The *Mingjili* discarded the divisions within ranked officials as well as the additional classes of the imperial clan, thus its prescribed classes were the emperor, heir apparent, imperial princes, princesses, ranked officials and commoners.

In the prescriptions the majority of the steps are the same or very similar for all the classes as the steps were mostly derived from the marriage ritual in the classics. Hence it is easily perceivable how the sequences of steps were varied between classes when reading through the prescriptions. There are cases where the same sequence of steps (headings) is prescribed for several classes. For the *Kaiyuan Li* the three classes of the ranked officials had identical steps while for the *Zhenghe Li* the two additional classes for the imperial clan shared the same sequence with ranked officials. The differences between these classes are merely represented by the detailed prescriptions under the headings, for example the number of ritual utensils, the types of meat to be consumed, or the cloths to be worn. In other words the variations in the sequence of the steps demonstrated a greater degree within the scale. It is likely that the compilers considered two adjacent classes more distant when they saw a necessity to prescribe a number of different steps than when differences were only prescribed as details under the steps. Hence the variations in the sequence of steps constitute one of the most notable signs of scale in the marriage ritual prescriptions.

However the *Mingjili* has a peculiar organization: in the case of marriage rituals, for each of the classes there are two types of headings for the steps. For one step A there could be two headings termed as “A” and “commentary to the procedure of A”.²² Under “A” there would be a review of precedents for A in former dynasties whereas under the “commentary to the procedure of A” there would be the actual prescriptions for the step A offered by the *Mingjili*. The end of the review usually mentions where to find the actual prescriptions. No other official prescriptions are known to have the same organization.²³

The special organization of the *Mingjili* makes it unclear which should be the prescribed sequence of steps for rituals for certain classes. Sometimes the “commentary to the procedure of A” does not exist and at the end of the review of “A” a vague reference is made to other relevant chapters.²⁴ Nevertheless it is not the case that the sequence of “commentaries to the procedure of A” only offer prescriptions for steps in the review that are not available elsewhere. There are also cases in which the prescriptions for a certain step exist without any review.²⁵ Occasionally there would exist only the review for the step without any corresponding prescriptions.²⁶ Thus the steps represented by the two types of headings do not match up with each other. For a step A it could be possible that the review “A” existed without the prescriptions as

²² “Commentary to the etiquette” is the translation of “儀注”.

²³ For the sequences of steps in the reviews and prescriptions as well as the overview in the preface see Table II-8 and Table II-9.

²⁴ For example the “sacrifice and notify” (祭告) in the review for the marriage ritual for the emperor.

²⁵ For example the “offering alcohol to the lady” (醴婦) in the prescriptions for the marriage ritual of princesses.

²⁶ For example the “meeting the officials” (會群臣) in the review for the marriage ritual of princesses.

“commentary to the etiquette of A” and vice versa. For all classes discrepancies exist between the reviews and the actual prescriptions. Furthermore the overviews of the rituals in the prefaces of the prescriptions are similar to the reviews for several classes and to the actual prescriptions for other classes. The inconsistencies in the preface, reviews and the actual prescriptions of the marriage rituals ought to have been an intrinsic feature of the *Mingjili* regardless of any possible problems caused by the edition.

The influence of the prescriptions compiled in Hongwu 1 is a potential cause of the inconsistencies. The Hongwu 1 prescriptions contain four classes: heir apparent, imperial princes, ranked officials and commoners. Apart from the commoners whose prescriptions were converted into a version very similar to that of the *Jiali* 家禮 (Family Rituals),²⁷ the prescriptions for all other classes should have been derived from this earlier set. The *Mingjili* almost reused the prescriptions from the Hongwu 1 set for the classes that had detailed prescriptions in this earlier set (i.e. the heir apparent and the ranked officials). For the imperial princes the steps for their marriage rituals were simply “all the same as [those in the marriage rituals] for the heir apparent” in the Hongwu 1 prescriptions. In the *Mingjili* the prescriptions for them are adopted from those for the heir apparent with minor adjustments. There are two classes absent from the Hongwu 1 prescriptions, the emperor and the princesses. The *Mingjili* prescriptions for the emperor appear to have been based on those for the heir apparent in the Hongwu 1 set with several additional steps whereas the princesses’ rituals are derived from the ranked officials in the earlier set with one additional step and one step removed. In other words, for the classes above the commoners the prescriptions

²⁷ Zhu Xi, *Jiali*, 3: 895–901.

in the *Mingjili* were adaptations from the Hongwu 1 set. The Hongwu 1 prescriptions were used as a main reference for the prescriptions, but not for the reviews in the *Mingjili*. The overviews were apparently efforts to compromise between the two sequences. The compilation of the reviews seem to have been a distinct process from the adaptation of the prescriptions, hence it was little influenced by the Hongwu 1 prescriptions.

A year after the completion of the *Mingjili* (Hongwu 4) the heir apparent Zhu Biao married the daughter of the deceased Chang Yuchun 常遇春 (1330-1369). The newly completed *Mingjili* wasn't mentioned in the record for this marriage ritual. It was only vaguely suggested that the ministry of rites proposed to the emperor a set of prescriptions that were compiled with reference to the Tang and Song precedents at the beginning of the reign. According to the *Veritable Records*, this proposal had a longer sequence of steps than the prescriptions as well as the reviews in the *Mingjili*. Actually the Hongwu 4 marriage ritual for the heir apparent appear to have blended in most of the steps from both the reviews and the prescriptions in the *Mingjili*. For example the steps in the prescriptions that are missing in the reviews such as the twice dispatching of a messenger are included in this proposal.²⁸ On the other hand one proposed step, the “congratulations from the officials [to the emperor]” (百官行賀禮), is similar to “meeting the officials” (會群臣) which is reviewed without prescriptions in the *Mingjili*.²⁹ Furthermore another similar step is added as “congratulations from

²⁸ *Qianshi* 遣使, one at the beginning of the marriage ritual and the other one before sending conferment.

²⁹ There is an instruction from the emperor to provide the feast for the officials and the appointed ladies at the palace three days after the consort's arrival at the palace. It is not clear whether these are two additional steps or equivalences to the congratulations to the emperor. (In historical precedents the meeting with the officials, the officials congratulating the emperor and the feast to them could be different steps, yet not would necessarily appear in marriage ritual descriptions.) In any case the

the inner and outer appointed ladies (i.e. ladies with ranks)” (內外命婦行賀禮). Thus the resulting marriage ritual for heir apparent Biao is similar to the prescriptions for the emperor in the *Mingjili*. (See Table II-1).

A persistent effort to move the marriage ritual for the heir apparent up the scale can be seen from the Hongwu 1 prescriptions, the *Mingjili* and in the Hongwu 4 practice. During this time the rituals for the heir apparent were distanced from those for imperial princes and moved towards those for the emperor. In Hongwu 1 the steps prescribed for the marriage ritual of the imperial princes were identical to those prescribed for the heir apparent. In the *Mingjili* the prescriptions for imperial princes were differentiated by reducing the first round of sending messengers as well as repositioning the ancestral sacrifice in the sequence of rituals. Eventually in Hongwu 4 the marriage ritual for the heir apparent was further elevated towards the prescribed rituals for the emperor. In fact the sequences of steps in the marriage rituals and the scale that they represented had already been altered in the Hongwu 1 prescriptions from those stated in their precedents. The upwards trajectory of the marriage rituals for the heir apparent in Hongwu 3 and Hongwu 4 was a response to these existing alterations. The differences between the reviews and prescriptions in the *Mingjili* were in a sense reflections of the changes from the historical precedents to the Hongwu 1 prescriptions. Furthermore the scale for marriage rituals prior to the Hongwu reign was not static; traces of its evolution can be found by comparing the Tang and Song precedents. The organization of the *Mingjili* was actually a testimony to the struggle

introductions of these steps represented additional interactions with the officials and appointed ladies which were absent from the earlier prescriptions.

that the Hongwu government underwent to secure its own innovations from historical precedents.

Hongwu 1 Prescriptions (1368)	<i>Mingjili</i> (Hongwu 3, 1370)		Hong 4 Practice (1371)
	Review	Prescriptions	
	Sacrifice Offering		
Dispatching of the messengers		Dispatching of the messengers	Dispatching of the messengers
Submission of the choice		Submission of the choice	Submission of the choice
Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name
Notification of the auspicious results	Notification of the auspicious results	Notification of the auspicious results	Submission of the auspicious results
Submission of the proof	Submission of the proof	Submission of the proof	Submission of the proof
Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date
	Report to the imperial ancestral shrine	Sacrifice offering to the imperial ancestral shrine	Sacrifice offering to the Imperial Ancestral Shrine
Dispatching of the messengers to deliver the conferment		Dispatching of the messengers to deliver the conferment	Dispatching of the messengers
Consort receiving the conferment of the title	Consort receiving the conferment of the title	Consort receiving the conferment of the title	Consort receiving the conferment of the title
Warning and toasting	Warning and toasting	Warning and toasting	Warning and toasting
Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person
Joining half Gourd (Ritualised dinner)	Joining half gourd (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Joining half gourd (Ritualised dinner)
Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress
[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner
Visiting the Imperial Family Shrine			Visiting the Imperial Family Shrine
	Meeting the officials		
			Congratulations from the officials [to the emperor]
			Congratulations from the inner and outer appointed ladies (i.e. ladies with ranks)
			Feast for the Officials
			Feast for the Appointed Ladies

Table II-1 The marriage ritual for the heir apparent in the Hongwu 1 prescriptions, the *Mingjili* (reviews and prescriptions) and the practice in Hongwu 4.

EVOLVING SCALE OF MARRIAGE RITUAL

The basic procedure for marriage rituals in all of the surviving official prescriptions is extracted from the marriage ritual for the *shi* (ordinary officers) in the *Yili*. According to the *Yili*, the procedure begins with the visit of the messengers from the man's family to the woman's family, and proceeds to the marriage agreements, the picking up of the bride, the ceremony of union, and the post-wedding events such as the bride's visiting of her parents-in-law.³⁰ Hence the marriage ritual in the *Yili* actually covers a three-part procedure of pre-wedding, wedding and post-wedding steps. However only the pre-wedding steps are taken as the norm of a marriage ritual, that is, the *liuli* 六禮 (six rites). These are initial contact and negotiations in the *nacai* 納采 (submission of the choice), *wenming* 問名 (asking the name), *naji* 納吉 (submission of the auspicious results), the marriage agreement as demonstrated by the *nazheng* 納徵 (submission of the proof), the *qingqi* 請期 (request of the date [of the wedding]) and the picking up of the bride, known as the *qinying* 親迎 (welcome in person). Although the ritual classics only provide marriage ritual guidelines for the *shi* (ordinary officers) class, the six rites are universal to all of the classes according to the principal sub-commentary of the *Yili*.³¹ The six terms are widely adopted in all extant ritual prescriptions and serve as elements to form the basic sequence in the official prescriptions, where multiple classes exist. Techniques had been developed to scale the marriage rituals from the basic sequence for the whole span of classes in each set

³⁰ Here the wedding is defined as the bride's first night with the groom.

³¹ *Yili Zhushu*, 2: 39.

of the official prescriptions. The later sets adopted the earlier techniques as well as including their own innovations.

The first technique was to insert extra steps, not only for the highest classes, but also for the lowest ones. This technique originated as early as the Tang *Kaiyuan Li* and constitutes the main technique for scaling the sequence of steps in this set of prescriptions. The basic sequence for marriage rituals prescribed for all of the classes in the *Kaiyuan Li* consists of six steps for the six rites and the wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws.³² In addition to the basic sequence at the top of the prescribed classes the emperor has fourteen extra steps while at the bottom the ranked officials (for all three classes) have five extra steps. Clearly, because their purpose is differentiation, the extra steps for the top class, that is the emperor (henceforth the high end steps), are totally different from those for the bottom classes of ranked officials (henceforth the low end steps). The marriage rituals for the middle classes normally consist of a mix of high and low end steps. The majority of the high end steps are, however, exclusive to the emperor. The next class, the heir apparent, only have five of the steps included in the prescriptions for the emperor; whereas the imperial princes and princesses both have only two. On the other hand all of the five low end steps are also prescribed for the princesses and four of them are prescribed for the imperial princes. The heir

³² The wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws refers to “見舅姑” and it equates to “the consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress” for imperial prince and the heir apparent. In the emperor's marriage ritual this step is referred to as “the empress having an audience with the empress-dowager”. The “presentation at the shrine by the empress” (皇后廟見) is a substitute for the empress's meeting with her father-in-law. The arrangement of the emperor's ancestral sacrifice in the *Kaiyuan Li* ought to comply with the opinion that the presentation in the shrine is a step for the wife when her in-laws (especial father-in-law) is dead before the marriage. Therefore to some extent the presentation in the shrine for the empress in the *Kaiyuan Li* is comparable to the meeting with the father-in-law. Hence although it is exclusive to the marriage of the emperor, it is not counted as a high end step. There were other opinions regarding the arrangement of the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage ritual which became more obvious in the Song official prescriptions. The effects of the different opinions on the scale will be discussed in the following text while a more detailed study on the development of ancestral sacrifice in the marriage ritual is presented in next chapter.

apparent has a special step “[the emperor’s] warning and toasting at the front of the palace” (臨軒醺戒) that is exclusive to that class.³³

For a given class, the proportion of the high end steps to low end steps demonstrates its position in the whole hierarchy. Furthermore between two adjacent classes the difference in numbers of high and low end steps determined the distance between them. In the *Kaiyuan Li* the greatest difference in the numbers of high end steps lies between the emperor and the heir apparent. The second greatest difference for high end steps is between the heir apparent and the imperial princes. For the number of low end steps the greatest difference is between the heir apparent and the imperial princes. Therefore in the *Kaiyuan Li* the scale in the sequences of steps focuses on differentiating the male members of the imperial family. As a matter of fact, when the Tang encyclopaedia of statecraft *Tongdian* 通典 (Encyclopaedic History of Institutions) collected the *Kaiyuan Li*, the marriage rituals for imperial princes were placed under the same category as those of ranked officials whereas those for the emperor and the heir apparent were put under their own categories.³⁴

People	Basic	High	Low	Specified
Emperor	All the Same	13	0	0
Heir Apparent		5	0	1
Imperial Princes		2	4	0
Princesses		2	5	0
Ranked Officials (3 classes)		0	5	0

Table II-2 The compositions of the sequence of the steps in the marriage rituals in the *Kaiyuan Li*

³³ The step sequences of the marriage rituals for the classes in the Tang *Kaiyuan Li* are shown in Table II-10 (appended to the chapter), the composition in Table II-2 and the differences in the numbers of high/low end steps are ranked in Table II-3.

³⁴ Du You, *Tongdian*, 129: 3300–3334.

The distances represented by the high and low end steps in the Song *Zhenghe Li* are not as clear as in the *Kaiyuan Li*: the first and second greatest differences in the high and low end steps do not have any overlap with each other.³⁵ Apparently the high and low end steps in the *Zhenghe Li* target different sections of the scale: the former are for differentiating between the emperor, heir apparent and the imperial princes whereas the latter place emphasis on the classes below the princesses. Moreover the *Zhenghe Li* developed two more types of scaling steps besides the high and low ends steps.

Rank of Difference	High	Low
1	Emperor vs Heir Apparent (8)	Heir Apparent vs Imperial Princes (4)
2	Heir Apparent vs Imperial Princes (3)	Imperial Princes vs Princesses (1)
3	Princesses vs Ranked Officials (2)	

Table II-3 The ranking of the differences in the numbers of high/low end steps in the *Kaiyuan Li* (The table only shows the adjacent classes when there is a difference between them, in other words it omits the adjacent classes when their difference equals zero. The numbers in the bracket are the differences between the two classes. Same applies for all the following tables).

The first innovation in the *Zhenghe Li* was the ancestral sacrifice step which had been a debated aspect of the marriage ritual since the Han. In the *Kaiyuan Li* there are steps prescribed for pre- and post-wedding ancestral sacrifices, and both are high end steps. The post-wedding sacrifice is only prescribed for the emperor's marriage ritual as "presentation at the shrine". For pre-wedding sacrifice a separated step is

³⁵ The sequences of the steps, compositions of the marriage rituals and the ranking for differences between classes in the *Zhenghe Li* are shown in Table II-11 (appended to the chapter), Table II-4 and Table II-5, respectively.

prescribed for the emperor and the heir apparent.³⁶ However in the *Zhenghe Li* the implementation of the ancestral sacrifice within the scale is more complex.³⁷ Both pre- and post-wedding steps are prescribed for the emperor, but only the pre-wedding step is prescribed for the imperial princes and princesses whereas only the post-wedding step is prescribed for all the lower classes. In terms of the ancestral sacrifices the members of imperial family, i.e. the immediate family of the emperor, are demarcated from the rest of the state in the *Zhenghe Li*.

People	Basic	High	Low	Medium	Ancestral Sacrifice
Emperor	All the same	8	0	0	Pre, Post
Heir Apparent		5	1	2 (M1, M3)	Pre
Princes		3	1	2 (M1, M3)	Pre
Princesses	-1	2	2	2 (M2, M3)	Pre
Imperial Clan Members (two classes) & Ranked Officials	The same as the princes	1	4	2 (M2, M3)	Post
Commoners	-2	0	4(-1)	0	Post

Table II-4 The compositions of the sequence of the steps in the marriage rituals in the *Zhenghe Li* (a minus number means merged headings.³⁸ M1 = [Emperor's] Warning and toasting; M2= Providing dinner to the woman; M3= [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner)

The second innovation is the prescription of special steps for the middle classes (i.e. steps excluded from marriage rituals of the emperor and commoners). The introduction of this type of steps which differentiates the middle classes from the two

³⁶In the marriage rituals for the classes of the princesses and below, the groom's father also performs a pre-wedding sacrifice but it is included in the groom's "picking up the bride in person" (親迎) rather than being prescribed as a separated step.

³⁷ This could be partially due to its contemporary intellectual development which inclined to the opinion that the presentation in the shrine as a post wedding sacrifice should be compulsory in the marriage ritual. The *Zhenghe Li* ancestral sacrifice is arranged according to the classes.

³⁸ When calculating the differences a decision has to be made whether to take the number of steps or that of the headings. For example for the *Zhenghe Li* prescribed four low end steps for the imperial clan members, the ranked officials and the commoners. However two of such steps merged into one heading in the prescriptions for the commoners so that they only had three headings for the four steps. The merger of the steps is treated as another means of differentiating between classes that is discussed and analysed separately. Therefore I take the number of the steps when calculating the differences.

ends is possibly due to the inclusion of the class of commoner below ranked official in this set of prescriptions. One step prescribed for all middle classes is the “[wife’s] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner” (*guankui* 盥饋). Another two steps for middle classes are possibly inspired by the special steps in the *Kaiyuan Li*. For example the step “[emperor’s] toasting and warning” (*jiaojie* 醺戒), which was exclusive to the heir apparent in the *Kaiyuan Li*, is also prescribed for the imperial princes in the *Zhenghe Li*. For the princesses, members of imperial clan and the ranked officials a step of “[offering] food to the wife” (饗婦) is prescribed. These two steps function to distinguish the heir apparent and the imperial princes from others classes.

Rank of Differences	High	Low
1	Emperor vs Heir Apparent (3)	Princesses vs Clan Members below Princes and Princesses /Ranked officials (2)
2	Heir Apparent vs Princes (2)	Princes vs Princesses; Emperor vs Heir Apparent (1)
3	Princesses vs Clan Members below Princes and Princesses; Ranked Officials vs Commoners (1)	

Table II-5 The ranking of the differences in the numbers of high/low end steps in the *Zhenghe Li*

The high and low end steps and the ancestral sacrifice in the *Zhenghe Li* serve to emphasise the importance of the immediately family of the emperor. On the other hand, the steps for the middle classes suggest the princesses are lower in status than the heir apparent and the imperial princes. What also sheds light on the partition among the prescribed classes is the variations in the basic sequence of the rituals for princesses and commoners. The steps of the basic sequence are merged for these two classes so that the six rites are prescribed as five steps for the princesses and four for

the commoners. The merging of steps is likely a sign of inferiority, highlighting the princesses' status as at the bottom of the immediate family of the emperor and the commoners' status as at the bottom of all the prescribed classes. Taking into consideration all of the above techniques, the prescribed classes are segmented with the emperor at the top of the scale, followed by the emperor's immediate family with the princesses at the bottom, then by the two classes for members of imperial clan and ranked officials, and finally by the commoners.

The prescriptions in the *Mingjili* takes advantage of the techniques developed in the Tang and Song precedents, normally with their applications altering in different degrees.³⁹ First of all similarly to the Tang *Kaiyuan Li* the adjacent classes with the greatest difference in low end steps are also those with the second greatest difference in high end steps. However the corresponding classes changed from the heir apparent and the imperial princes in the *Kaiyuan Li* to the imperial princes and princesses in the *Mingjili*. In other words, the greatest distance represented by the high and low end steps shifts to between the imperial princes and princesses in the *Mingjili*. Secondly, the merger of steps in the basic sequence is applied to all of the classes below the imperial princes, which also illustrates a clear division between the imperial princes and the princesses. Thirdly, similar to the *Zhenghe Li* the steps for the middle classes differentiate them from the two ends as well as segmenting them. However the princesses have a special step of “offering alcohol to the lady” (*lifu* 醴婦) which positions the class as an intermediate segment between the two upper classes (heir apparent and imperial princes) and the ranked officials. Finally the ancestral sacrifice

³⁹ For the sequences of the steps, compositions and rankings in the *Mingjili*, see Table II-12 (appended to the chapter), Table II-6 and Table II-7, respectively.

ceases to be a means for scaling as only the heir apparent is prescribed this as a pre wedding step. All of the other classes from the emperor to the commoners are prescribed the post-wedding step except the class of the princesses which do not have an ancestral sacrifice prescribed. Combining the outcomes of all three scaling techniques in the *Mingjili* (i.e. high and low end steps, merging steps in basic sequence and including middle steps) the difference between the imperial princes and the princesses is the most emphasized.

People	Basic	High	Low	Medium	Ancestral Sacrifice
Emperor	All the Same	7	0	0	Post
Heir Apparent		4	1	2 (M1, M3)	Pre
Imperial Princes		3	1	2 (M1, M3)	Post
Princesses	-1	1	3(-1)	2 (M2, M3)	Post
Ranked Officials	-1	1	3	1 (M3)	Post
Commoners	-2	0	4(-1)	0	Post

Table II-6 The compositions of the sequence of the steps in the marriage rituals in the *Mingjili* (M1 = Emperor's Warning and Toasting; M2= Making a toast to the woman; M3=[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner.)

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Rank of Difference	High	Low
1	Emperor vs Heir Apparent (3)	Imperial Princes vs Princesses (2)
2	Imperial Princes vs Princesses (2)	Emperor vs Heir Apparent; Ranked Officials vs Commoners (1)
3	Heir Apparent vs Imperial Prince / Ranked Officials vs Commoners (1)	

Table II-7 The rankings of the differences in the numbers of high/low end steps in the *Mingjili*.

The general trends of change in the scale can be observed through close inspection of the techniques developed and employed in the prescriptions from the Tang to the early Ming. The number of the high end steps for the emperor dropped from 13 in the Tang *Kaiyuan Li*, to 8 in the Song *Zhenghe Li* and then 7 in the *Mingjili*.

⁴⁰ Comparing to other classes, the basic sequence of the commoners merged the steps "submission of the proof" and "requesting of the date" were into one heading. Furthermore the step "asking the name" was omitted. Therefore I put -2 here.

For the heir apparent the drop was not as dramatic, with 5 steps in the *Kaiyuan Li* and 4 in both the *Zhenghe Li* and the *Mingjili*. For the imperial princes the number of high end steps increased from 2 in the *Kaiyuan Li* to 3 in the *Zhenghe Li* and remained the same in the *Mingjili*. Moreover the number of low end steps for the imperial princes dropped from 4 in the *Kaiyuan Li* to 1 in the *Zhenghe Li* and *Mingjili*.⁴¹ The imperial princes have no step for ancestral sacrifice prescribed in the *Kaiyuan Li*. They then have the pre-wedding step but no post-wedding step in the *Zhenghe Li*. In the *Mingjili* the imperial princes have the same post-wedding step as the emperor. From the Song the imperial princes start to be prescribed the same middle-level steps as the heir apparent. The merger of the steps that has been taken a sign of low status in the *Mingjili* is not applied to the imperial princes. In sum the distance between the male members of imperial family, especially between the sons of the emperor is generally decreased from the *Kaiyuan Li* to the *Mingjili* in all aspects.

Yet within the scope of the early Hongwu reign, the *Mingjili* is an effort to distinguish between the marriage rituals for the heir apparent and the imperial princes that were almost identical in the initial Hongwu 1 (1368) prescriptions. In contrast the distance between the heir apparent and imperial princes is the highlight of the Tang precedent in the *Kaiyuan Li*. The intermediate Song *Zhenghe Li* elevates the imperial princes and princesses as a means of distinguishing the immediate family of the emperor from the rest of the state. The Hongwu 1 prescriptions totally abandon the differences between the sequences of steps for the sons of the emperor. It appears that there were disagreements about such arrangements at the time and the alternative arrangement was then gradually implemented through the *Mingjili* published in

⁴¹ That is, the same number as the heir apparent whereas the princesses have the same number of the low end steps as the commoners in the *Mingjili*.

Hongwu 3 and through the practice in Hongwu 4. The two different sequences in the *Mingjili* reflect the struggle in defining the scale during the process. The prescriptions in the *Mingjili* tried to follow the Hongwu 1 prescriptions which reduced the distance between the sons of the emperor. On the other hand in the reviews of the *Mingjili* the historical steps were presented, which resulted in a greater differences between the heir apparent and the imperial princes, and therefore a scale closer to the precedents. More steps were applied to the practice in the Hongwu 4 for the heir apparent. However in the prescriptions published by the subsequent emperor (Emperor Jianwen, 1377-?, r.1399-1402) the sequence of steps are again all the same for the heir apparent and the imperial princes.⁴² Hence the idea of reducing the distance between the two classes was more influential in the following reign.

CHANGES IN THE POSITION OF IMPERIAL FAMILIES IN STATE

HIERARCHY FROM THE TANG TO THE SONG

The scaling of the marriage rituals in the above prescriptions all corresponded to the socio-political context in which they were written. They should be seen as the official outlines of the social-political hierarchy. In particular the arrangement of the marriage rituals of imperial family/clan members in each set of the prescriptions indicates their position in relation to others participants in the social-political sphere in the corresponding periods. Both the general development in the political and social environment and the particular vision of the reigning emperor and his officials were factors contributing to the changes in the prescriptions. The following section will

⁴² However the Jianwen set attached a class of the heir of the imperial prince who took residence at the principality, again likely as a reflection of the strategy of the emperor employed to manage the imperial clan. The manuscript from the Fu Ssu-nien Library in Academia Sinica, "Huang Ming Dianli," 59a – 68a.

examine these factors in order to enhance the understanding how the scale in the *Mingjili* took on its form.

After the fall of the Han dynasty (206 BC – 220 AD), a small number of clans were preeminent in the social sphere. These clans remained at the highest level of the elite during the Tang dynasty. The emperor Taizong of Tang (598-649, r.626-649) commissioned his minister of personnel Gao Shilian 高士廉 (575-647) to compile a *Record of Clans* (氏族志 *Shizu zhi*). It was to the emperor's great disappointment that the draft edition listed the clan of Cui Migan 崔民幹 (?) from Shandong as in the first rank. The emperor commented:

My compilation of the *Records of Clans* now, honestly is to establish and promote the caps (metaphor for the official ranks) of our dynasty. Why is Cui Migan still placed at the first rank? It just shows that [even] you officials do not regarded our official ranks and titles highly.

我今定《氏族志》，誠欲崇樹今朝冕冠，何因崔民幹猶為第一等，只看卿等不貴我官爵耶！⁴³

Thereupon Cui Migan was demoted to the third rank in the final edition of *Record of Clans*, in which the imperial clan was placed as the first rank. Through the *Record of Clans* emperor Taizong aimed to promote the ranks assigned by his own

⁴³ Wu Jing, *Zhenguan Zhengyao*, 7: 226–227. In the *Xin Tangshu* Cui Gan of Boling (博陵) was suggested to be listed at the first rank, see Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 95:3841. Cui Gan was from the second house of the Boling branch of the clan of Cui, for details see Ibid, 72: 2792–2810. See also Ebrey, *The Aristocratic Families in Early Imperial China: A Case Study of the Po-Ling Ts'ui Family*.

government as well as the status of his own clan.⁴⁴ However even his own personnel were under influence of the predominant recognition of the social hierarchy: the old clans were still regarded as at the top of society.

Throughout the Tang when selecting a spouse more attention was paid to pedigree instead of political power.⁴⁵ The request of Emperor Wenzong of the Tang (809-840, r.827-840) to the counsellor-in-chief Zheng Tan 鄭覃 (?-842) asking for a lady from Zheng's clan to be the consort of his heir apparent was rejected.⁴⁶ However later Zheng Tan married off his own granddaughter to Cui Gao 崔皋 (?), an official at the bottom of the political hierarchy (ranked 9). This behaviour was even appreciated by the emperor, as "the emperor respected him as [he did not] marry off [his clan members] to clans in power".⁴⁷ Yet when emperor Wenzong encountered difficulties again in marrying off his children, this time concerning two princesses, he said bitterly: "when people consider marriages, [they] emphasise pedigrees rather than official ranks. We have been the clan of the son of heaven for two hundreds of years, but are [still] not comparable to [the clan] of Cui and Lu?"⁴⁸ After two centuries emperor Taizong's expectation had not been fulfilled and political power still could not take precedence over pedigree in the social sphere during the reign of Wenzong.

⁴⁴ Detailed discussion on the promotion of the political ranks, see Wang Jian, "Tang Taizong Shuli Xin Menfa de Yitu," 150–164.

⁴⁵ Ebrey, "Three Shifts in Marriage Finance from the Sixth to the Thirteenth Century."

⁴⁶ Li Fang, *Taiping Guangji*, 184: 1379.

⁴⁷ Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 172: 5306.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 172: 5206: 民間修婚姻，不計官品而上閥閱。我家二百年天子，顧不及崔、盧耶。 The clan of Lu is likely to be the one recorded in Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 73: 2884–2941.

Imperial blood was also not a determinant of one's position in the political sphere. For example the minister of rites Wang Gui 王珪 (570-639) presented a memorial to Taizong, suggesting that it was inappropriate for officials ranked 3 and above to dismount when encountering imperial princes. The "lord specially advanced" (*tejin* 特進, ranked 2a) Wei Zheng 魏徵 (580-243) also commented:⁴⁹

The rank of the imperial princes is lower than the three dukes, those who are ranked 3 at present are equivalent to nine chief-ministers and eight executives; it is truly inappropriate for [them] to dismount for the imperial princes.

諸王位次三公，今三品皆九卿、八座，為王降乘，誠非所宜當。⁵⁰

Emperor Taizong was only able to respond that:

Supposing the heir apparent unfortunately [died], how do you know that the imperial princes wouldn't be your master in some day?

萬一太子不幸，安知諸王他日不為公輩之主！⁵¹

⁴⁹ Unless specified the official titles in this thesis are all in accordance to Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China*.

⁵⁰ Sima Guang, *Zizhi Tongjian*, 195: 6135.

⁵¹ Ibid.

From this conversation it is clear that there was a mutual agreement that if an imperial prince remained in this status for his entire life, neither the emperor nor his officials would consider him superior to those who ranked 3 and above.

For the Tang dynasty the reign of Taizong was a period when the imperial princes were given positions with actual power. Emperor Taizong planned to grant hereditary titles to the imperial princes and some of the top ranked officials. The hereditary designations terminated after several years because of objection from officials, but the imperial princes were still appointed prefects and dispatched to head the local government in their assigned prefectures.⁵² Nevertheless at the beginning of the reign of Kaiyuan (713-741) emperor Xuanzong (685-762, r.712-756) circumscribed the power of the imperial princes in a decree to them, stating that “upon arrival to your posts [you] only need to oversee [the prefectures], the ‘principal territory aids’ (*shangzuo* 上佐, a local official) should be responsible for the rest of the businesses of the prefectures”.⁵³ In the ninth year he summoned all the imperial princes from their regional posts back to the capital. From then on the imperial princes were given nominal (*ling* 領) or in absentia (*yaoling* 遙領) appointments without actual power and remained in the capital.⁵⁴ The *Kaiyuanli* was commissioned in the fourteenth year - after this demotion of the imperial princes in the political hierarchy.⁵⁵

⁵² For the plan and its withdrawn see Ibid., 195: 6130; 6145–6146. For the appointment of imperial princes as prefects see Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 64: 2423–2425. See also Twitchett, “The T’ang Imperial Family,” 34–36.

⁵³ Sima Guang, *Zizhi Tongjian*, 211: 6701.

⁵⁴ Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 49: 1310.

⁵⁵ Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 11:309. For details of the imperial princes and their posts as prefect in the Tang see Liu Siyi, “Tangdai Zongshi Guanli Zhidu Yanjiu,” 45–47. Ke Honggang, “Tangdai Huangshi Chengyuan Churen Cishi Fenbu Tedian Ji Yuanyin Lunxi.” Twitchett, “The T’ang Imperial Family,” 44–47. The status of the imperial princes became more concerned after the

The perception of the relatively low position of imperial princes in comparison to high ranked officials lasted into the tenth century. In the *Jiu Tangshu*, the biographies of imperial princes were placed after those of eminent officials from the same period. For example the sons of emperor Xuanzong are included under the 57th entry of the biography section (列傳第五十七) whereas the biography of the eminent officials Zhang Yue 張說 (667-730) and Xiao Song 蕭嵩 (668-749) are the 47th and 49th entries respectively.⁵⁶ Many of these high officials were from special backgrounds, for example Zhang and Xiao were both from clans with a record of high officials. Some of the clans became so influential that tables were made for their lineage in the *Xin Tangshu* under a section entitled “the clans of counsellors-in-chief” (宰相世家). These high officials were widely involved in political cultural and social activities: the compilation of the *Kaiyuan Li* was actually under the supervision of Zhang Shuo and Xiao Song.

In the *Kaiyuan Li* the marriage rituals for the imperial princes are placed before those of the ranked officials. Yet the headings in the prescriptions for the imperial princes are closer to those in the prescriptions for the ranked officials in comparison to those for the heir apparent. Therefore even through the lens provided by this official set of prescriptions, the imperial family was a loosely connected unit: the status of imperial princes is similar to that of officials whereas the emperor and the

An Lushan rebellion, for a detailed research see McMullen, “The Emperor, the Princes, and the Prefectures: A Political Analysis of the Pu’an Decree of 756 and the Fengjian Issue.”

⁵⁶ Biography of Zhang Shuo in Liu Xu, *Jiu Tangshu*, 97: 3049–3060. Xiao Song in *Ibid.*, 99: 3093–3096. *Ibid.*, 106: 3241–3247. The sons of emperor Xuanzong are all in *Ibid.*, 107: 3257–3273. In contrast the biographies of the empresses and top imperial concubines are listed as the first two entries *Ibid.*, 51–52: 2161–2190. The structure of the biography section indicates a hierarchy of people in perceptions of the authors of this historical work if we accept that the *Jiu Tangshu* followed the example that can be traced to at least the early Tang, e.g. the *Suishu* 隋書 was organized in the same manner.

heir apparent were separated from them. The overall impact of the imperial blood in one's status was limited and the imperial princes were indistinct from ranked officials who gained their statuses through pedigree, marriage connections or other means.

The decline of the preeminent clans at the end of the five dynasties (907-979) led to a refreshed perception of the state hierarchy in the Song. One of the strongest pieces of evidence for this is the biography section in the *Xin Tangshu* where the biographies of sons and daughters of the Tang emperor are brought forward to be placed in front of those of all officials.⁵⁷ This arrangement in the *Xin Tangshu* by the Northern Song historian echoes the scale of the marriage rituals in the *Zhenghe Li* where one division is made under the class of princesses. This division effectively separated the imperial family from the rest of the state.

During the Song there were several major revisions to the strategies for the management of the imperial clan passed from the previous dynasties such as the Han and the Tang. The two main variables were the inclusion of the imperial clan and the political power given to the imperial clan. At the beginning of the Han close imperial relatives were made rulers of large areas of territory over which they exercised direct control. In the reigns of the subsequent emperors, efforts were made to weaken the power of these imperial relatives by reducing the sizes of their kingdoms as well as restraining their power in governing the kingdoms. Emperor Wu (167-87BC, r. 141-87BC) adapted a system of dividing a king's territory among his sons who were all made marquises.⁵⁸ Subsequent generations of the Han clansman received no titles. The

⁵⁷For biographies for sons of emperors see Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 79–82: 3569–3639. For daughters of emperors see *Ibid.*, 83: 3641–3676.

⁵⁸ Ch'u, *Han Social Structure*, 165–167.

Tang defined a hierarchy of five levels within the imperial clan following the five degrees of mourning and “[those who are lower and] beyond the five degrees are not considered kin”.⁵⁹ From the reign of Xuanzong of the Tang the imperial clan members, especially the imperial princes were all removed from their posts in influential offices and local government with compensation of salaries.⁶⁰

In the Song all imperial descendants were recognized as the imperial clan by the founder emperor Taizu (927-976).⁶¹ His successor, emperor Taizong (939-996, r. 927-976) imposed a ban on clansmen holding posts of any political importance.⁶² Later during the reign of Shenzong (1048-1085, r.1067-1085) the growth of the imperial clan incurred an enormous cost to support them. After consulting his officials, emperor Shenzong promulgated an edict to cut off the imperial clan according to the five degree of mourning clothes. Non-mourning kin were not dropped from the imperial genealogy but no longer received imperial support such as having a name and office.⁶³ As compensation they were given the permission to take the imperial examinations and take up regular posts. In the reign of Huizong (1082-1135, r. 1100-1126) there were a growing number of clansmen serving as regular officials and legislation was developed to regulate the posts that clansman could hold.⁶⁴ A set of prescriptions from the same reign, the *Zhenghe Li* placed emphasis on the differentiation between the immediate family of the emperor (i.e. the imperial princes and the princesses) and

⁵⁹ Ma Duanlin, *Wenxian Tongkao*, 259:2055.

⁶⁰ Twitchett, “The T’ang Imperial Family,” 54–57.

⁶¹ The descendants of his brothers were also included.

⁶² Chaffee, *Branches of Heaven: A History of the Imperial Clan of Sung China*, 22–25.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 64–94.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 107–110.

other more distant clansman. On the other hand the marriage rituals for the emperor and heir apparent were still distinct, as befitting the only two members of the imperial family who were supposed to exercise political powers.

As Chaffee suggested, the Song “marks an important watershed in terms of the idea of imperial clans”.⁶⁵ The definition of the imperial clan as a category of imperial descendants by the Song influenced the Ming, yet there were changes in the arrangement of the imperial clan during the Ming, probably under the influence of the Yuan (1206-1368). The conference or council of princes and nobles known as the *quriltai* (忽裡台) constitutes an early Mongol institution, predating the Mongol invasion of China. The *quriltai* was believed to be the “only legitimate forum for political and military issues” where a new ruler would be selected and acclaimed, and military strategies and campaign would be discussed.⁶⁶ Genghis Khan (成吉思汗 1162-1227, r. 1206-1227) described the ideology: “all the brothers have agreed that once all under Heaven was seized [by us], [we] will divide the territory between ourselves and share the wealth and honour together”.⁶⁷ The nobles and princes of the early Mongolian period, during the conquest held fiefs consisting of both land and the people residing within it. During the reign of Ögödei (窩闊台 1186-1241, r. 1229-1241) the imperial advisor Urtu Saqal (Chinese name Yelü Chucai 耶律楚才, 1189-1243) proposed reducing the power of princes and nobles over their lands and subjects.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 261–267.

⁶⁶ Endicott-West, “Imperial Governance in Yuan Times,” 525–540.

⁶⁷ *Da Yuan Shengzheng Guochao Dianzhan*, dianzhang 9: 143.

However it was not until the conquest of the former Southern Song capital during the reign of Qubilai (忽必烈 1215-1294, r.1260-1294) that the emperor started to effectively maintain control over the princes and nobles, especially within the realm of their economic activities.⁶⁸ At the same time the *quriltai* faded as a political institution, yet remaining as a celebratory event. Qubilai's government absorbed elements of the existing Song bureaucracy and attempted to keep civilian and military personnel separated. Qubilai dispatched his sons to defensive posts along the southern and northern borderline. Thus these princes were assigned military power whereas they were mostly restrained from collecting revenue from their principality. In principle their personnel were parallel to their local provincial officials, who would directly report to the emperor.⁶⁹ From the middle to the end of the Yuan dynasty designations of those without imperial blood as top-ranked nobility became increasingly frequent and led to chaos in the political order.⁷⁰

In retrospect, the collapse of the preeminent clans before the Song and the Mongolian conquest of China before the Ming caused the changes in the policy regarding the imperial family and clan. At the time of the Tang *Kaiyuan Li* the imperial clan was defined in accordance with the mourning code. Imperial blood was neither comparable to the eminent pedigrees in the social sphere nor a guarantee of a high rank in the political hierarchy. In the Song the definition of the imperial clan was broadened to include all of the emperor's descendants though at the same time the

⁶⁸ A brief discussion of this change see Farquhar, *The Government of China Under Mongolian Rule: A Reference Guide*, 17–19. See also Chen Gaohua and Shi Weimin, *Zhongguo Zhengzhi Zhidu Shi* (*Yuandai Juan*), 154–184.

⁶⁹ Li Zhi'an, *Yuandai Fenfeng Zhidu Yanjiu*, 197–204.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 194–208.

imperial blood was restrained from political power. The *Zhenghe Li* presented this change by including members of the imperial clan together with differentiating between the immediate family of the emperor and the rest of the state including other members of the imperial clan. In the Yuan dynasty those with imperial blood could receive the same military appointments as those that were given to nobles. Although the Yuan did not produce any official prescriptions for marriage rituals, its state organization left an impact on the perception of the imperial blood. The elevation of the imperial bloodline was reflected by the scale in the Hongwu 1 prescriptions and the *Mingjili*, especially with regard to the position of the imperial princes.

EMPHASIS ON THE IMPERIAL PRINCES IN THE HONGWU REIGN

In Hongwu 9 (1376) the scholar Ye Boju 葉伯巨 (?-1376) died in prison, where he was sent in response to the memorial he presented to the Hongwu emperor commenting on the emperor's establishment of principalities. In his memorial requesting limitations on the power of the imperial princes, Ye quoted the turmoil caused by the over-powerful princes in the Han and Jin dynasties as lessons of such type of state organization.⁷¹ Nevertheless it appears that slightly earlier, before Ye's memorial, the Hongwu emperor already reduced the power of the imperial princes and separated their personnel from the provincial officials, such arrangement was possibly inspired by the political organization of the Yuan.⁷²

The policy for managing the imperial blood in the Hongwu reign was similar to the process of composition of the prescriptions, in that it was also innovative based

⁷¹ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 139: 3390.

⁷² Huang Zhangjian, "Lun Huang Ming Zuxunlu Banxing Niandai Bing Lun Mingchu Fengjian Zhuwang Zhidu," 129–133.

on certain features selected from existing precedents. First, the Hongwu definition of the imperial clan was inherited from the Song dynasty. As with the Song, the imperial clan was not limited by the mourning code but included all of the descendants of the same imperial ancestor. Secondly, the fact that the Hongwu emperor granted military power to the imperial princes made the situation different from the Song. Thirdly there was an unprecedented distinction between titles granted to the imperial clan and those for meritorious officials from the beginning of the reign.

In the fourth moon of Hongwu 3 (1370) the Hongwu emperor granted his ten sons including a two month old baby, the highest rank of nobility (i.e. *qinwang* 親王 imperial prince or literally king of blood).⁷³ In the eleventh moon he appointed the top meritorious officials such as the first literary advisor Li Shanchang and the general Xu Da (1332-1385) at one rank lower as dukes.⁷⁴ The only meritorious official who received the title of *wang* 王 (king) in that year was the deceased Guo Zixing 郭子興 (1302-1355). Throughout the entire reign the title of *wang* was only granted posthumously to meritorious officials.⁷⁵ According to the etiquette the heir apparent and the imperial princes were to be greeted by the officials with four bows and dukes and marquises were to be greeted with two bows (and one bow in return to those

⁷³ Zhu Tan 朱檀 (1370-1390) who was born in the second moon of Hongwu 3 was appointed Prince of Lu (魯王), see Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 2:24. In this thesis the classification ‘imperial princes’ is used both to refer to the sons of the emperor other than the heir apparent and the designated title. It will always be specified if referring to the title.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ In the Hongwu reign Xu Da, Tang He 湯和 (1326-1395) and the emperor’s adopted son Mu Ying 沐英 (1334-1392) all only received the title of *wang* posthumously. Besides the emperor’s sons the only person who received the title of *wang* (as Jingjiang wang, i.e. prince (lit. king) of Jiangjing) was also a blood relative, i.e. the son of emperor’s nephew Zhu Shouqian 朱守謙 (1361-1392).

officials of rank 1).⁷⁶ Although two different sets of the titles were designated for the imperial clan and the meritorious officials,⁷⁷ there existed an overall hierarchy of the government in which imperial princes were placed close to the heir apparent and higher than dukes and marquises. Ranked officials without any noble titles were generally lower in the hierarchy.

Thus the Hongwu state hierarchy was strictly in the order of blood relations, meritorious deeds (in the founding of the dynasty) and finally duties (which was represented by the bureaucrats). This structure deviated from the previous dynasties when the precedents prescriptions were compiled. In the Tang the ranking of all personnel was first arranged in accordance to their official ranks when they presented at the court. The titles of nobilities only mattered when arranging officials with the same official rank. Although the princes normally stood in the front of all the officials, in the case that they were appointed low rank posts their position should be accorded to their official ranks.⁷⁸ In other words, the official ranking system was the main determinant of the hierarchy of the Tang government. The situation was complicated in the Song by the fact that the Song emperors did not often grant their sons the title

⁷⁶ *Liyi Dingshi*, 8: 458.

⁷⁷ The imperial clan were granted titles such as *wang* 王 (lit. king, *qinwang* 親王 imperial prince, *junwang* 郡王 commandery prince), *jiangjun* 將軍 general (i.e. *zhenguo jiangjun* 鎮國將軍 defender general of the state, *fuguo jiangjun* 輔國將軍 bulwark-general of the state, *fengguo jiangjun* 奉國將軍 supporting general of the state), *zhongwei* 中尉 commandant (*zhenguo zhongwei* 鎮國中尉, *fuguo jiangjun* 輔國中尉 bulwark commandant of the state, *fengguo jiangjun* 奉國中尉 supporter commandant of the state). The titles granted to living meritorious officials were *gong* 公 (duke), *hou* 侯 (marquise) and *bo* 伯 (earl), which were generally considered as the titles designated for meritorious officials by the Ming government. (e.g. Yan Buke, *Zhongguo Gudai Guanjie Yinlun*, 387–388.) However during the reign of the Yongle Emperor (1403-1424) there was a case of granting a surrounded Mongolian prince the title of *wang* (king) in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 156: 4274. Furthermore it was prescribed that when a meritorious official died with the title of duke, the title of king would be granted to him posthumously. (Zhai Shan, *Zhushi Zhizhang*, 195. Also Shen Shixing, *[Wanli] Da Ming Huidian*, 6: 121.)

⁷⁸ Li Linfu, *Tang Liudian*, 2: 33.

of imperial prince. The two sons of the emperor Taizu did not receive the title of imperial prince until the reign of their uncle Taizong (the successor of Taizu, 939-997, r. 976-997).⁷⁹ Even for those who have received the title of imperial prince they would stand at the end of the group of rank 1 behind officials such as the grand protector and the grand mentor when they presented at court.⁸⁰ This order suggests that although the Song defined the imperial clan as a relatively concrete entity, its members were still not positioned at the top of the hierarchy of the government.

The situation changed in the Yuan. Qubilai established a noble system which included six levels of kings with a regulation that only princes of blood should occupy the top level. However under his reign there were still princes of blood appointed at lower levels together with meritorious officials.⁸¹ The organization of the Yuan left an impact over the perception of the imperial family. The Hongwu reign reinforced the state to be reorganized in favour of the imperial bloodline. Thus the emperor and his sons were grouped more tightly than the historical precedents. In particular the imperial princes were unprecedentedly elevated to a position close to the heir apparent. This change is clearly indicated in the scale of marriage rituals in the Hongwu 1 prescriptions and the *Mingjili*. The code for dresses in the *Mingjili* also reflects an unprecedented emphasis on the division between the male members of the imperial family and the rest of the state.⁸² Therefore the elevated position of the imperial princes and the reduced difference between them and the heir apparent were the result of a

⁷⁹ Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 244: 8676–8686.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 168: 4014.

⁸¹ Li Zhi'an, *Yuandai Fenfeng Zhidu Yanjiu*, 241–254, 258–261.

⁸² Zhang Jia, *Xin Tianxia Zhi Jiahua: Ming Chu Lidu Gaige Yanjiu*, 81–95. Zhang Zhiyun, “Chongsu Huangquan: Huangwu Shiqi de Mianzhi Guihua.”

consensus accepted by the compilers of the *Mingjili*. Their only disagreement was on the level of the elevation and hence they adjusted the distance between the heir apparent and the imperial princes.

CONCLUSION

Although the main point of reference in the classics remained the same for the marriage rituals, their scales gradually changed in the official prescriptions in the Tang, the Song and through to the beginning of the Hongwu reign (i.e. *Kaiyuan Li*, *Zhenghe Li*, Hongwu 1 prescriptions). The development in the scale associated with the changes in policy towards the imperial clan and family responded to evolutions in the political and social environment. In the Hongwu reign the imperial princes were granted titles superior to those of people who had carried out meritorious deeds. The group of meritorious officials was placed on the next level of the hierarchy receiving titles of nobility superior to the rest of the state. The coexisting yet conflicting scales for marriage rituals in the reviews and prescriptions of the *Mingjili* were a reflection of the difference in the positioning of the imperial family members between the precedents from the Tang and Song and the contemporary rituals which was also influenced by Yuan practice. Furthermore a disagreement in the degree of elevation the imperial princes should be given possibly existed between the two groups of the compilers. While the group of officials who assisted in the founding of the dynasty might have more sympathy with their contemporary arrangement, the group of recruited literati possibly preferred the precedents in the texts.

In the Hongwu 4 (1371) practice the heir apparent was again elevated to be differentiated from the imperial princes. However according to the official prescriptions from the later period of the Ming, imperial family members were

generally regarded as a special subset of the state in the scale of the marriage ritual. Toward the late Ming (Wanli 1573-1620) the *Da Ming Huidian* collected the prescriptions for the emperor produced in the Zhengtong reign (1436-1449), those for the heir apparent produced in the Chenghua reign (1465-1487), those for the imperial princes and princesses produced in the later Hongwu reign and those for ranked officials and commoners from the *Mingjili*.⁸³ According to their time of production the prescriptions can be divided into ranked officials and commoners (early Hongwu), then the imperial princes and princesses (late Hongwu), and finally the heir apparent and the emperor (post Hongwu). In particular the prescriptions for the emperor and the heir apparent produced in the later periods of the Ming were all based on the those for the imperial princes produced in the late Hongwu reign (Hongwu 26 [1393] and 27 [1394], respectively).

In the prescriptions of Hongwu 26 the first three of the six rites were removed in the marriage rituals for imperial princes. The prescriptions published in the subsequent Jianwen reign (1399-1402) employed the same basic sequence without the first three rites for all the male members of the imperial clan. In the *Da Ming huidian* the removed rites were restored for the emperor and the heir apparent, suggesting the distance between the imperial princes with the heir apparent and the emperor was increased again, possibly as a result of the abolishment of the imperial princes' power which was fully implemented in the Xuande reign (1426-1435).⁸⁴ However the marriage rituals for the emperor and the heir apparent were revised by upgrading those

⁸³ Here the dates are taken for the definition of the sequence of steps so that the dates for later revisions to the details under certain steps were discarded.

⁸⁴ For the marriage rituals contained in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions and those in the *Da Ming Huidian* (including the Hongwu 27 prescriptions) see Table II-13.

for the imperial princes.⁸⁵ Meanwhile the marriage rituals for the imperial princes were kept the same rather than being downgraded to being similar to those for ranked officials. Hence the clear differentiation between the imperial princes and ranked officials was preserved throughout the Ming and in this sense so was the idea of the male members of the imperial family as a unity.⁸⁶

The conflict in the scale for the marriage rituals in stage one shows that the emperor had not yet gained full control of the rituals. As Qiu Jun 邱浚 (1421-1495) suggested:

When [the Ming government] had just established, it was after the [Yuan dynasty] when scholarship was withered, as for the matter of [compiling] prescriptions in accordance to antiquity, there were some Confucian scholars (compilers) who did not fulfil the objectives of the emperor. Although the work of *Da Mingjili* was completed at the time, it did not provide a [good] balance [of the rituals of the past and the ideas of the current dynasty].

⁸⁵ Many special treatments were developed in marriage rituals for the imperial princes in the Hongwu 26/27 sets. Most of them were adapted in the later prescriptions for the emperor and the heir apparent. For example the unprecedented arrangement of ancestral sacrifice and the merge of the *ce* and the basic sequence. Please see the next two chapters for the detailed study of the later developments in the Hongwu reign and their impact on the later prescriptions.

⁸⁶ The princesses had five of the six rites removed from their marriage rituals in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions. Their sequence of steps formed a special layer between the male members of the imperial family and the ranked officials in the *Da Ming Huidian*.

草創之初、廢學之後，稽古禮文之事，諸儒容或有未足以當上意者。當時雖輯成《大明集禮》一書，然亦無所折衷。⁸⁷

At the end of the first stage, the emperor successfully adapted his own vision into the mourning clothes for parents. This kicked-start the following stage when the emperor managed to discard the unsatisfactory Confucian scholars and implement his ideology of the state in the compilation of the rituals as well as in the organization of the government.

⁸⁷ Qiu Jun, *Daxue Yanyi Bu*, 37: 337.

Table II-8 Marriage rituals in the prefaces, reviews and the prescriptions of the *Mingjili* (From the emperor to the imperial princes)

			Heir Apparent			Imperial Princes		
Preface	Review	Prescriptions	Preface	Review	Prescriptions	Preface	Review	Prescriptions
Sacrifice offering to the Heaven and Earth and imperial ancestral shrine	Sacrifice offering			Sacrifice offering				
[Emperor's] appointing of the messengers at the front of the palace hall		[Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers	[Emperor's] appointing of the messengers at the front of the palace hall		Dispatching of the messengers	dispatching of the messengers		
Six rites	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice		Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice
	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name
	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results
	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof
	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date
			Report to the imperial ancestral shrine	Report to the imperial ancestral shrine	Sacrifice offering to the Imperial ancestral shrine	Report to the imperial ancestral shrine		
		[H][Emperor's] dispatching of the			Dispatching of the messengers			Dispatching of the messengers

		messengers at the front of the palace hall to confer and welcome the empress			to deliver the conferment			to deliver the conferment
		[H] Empress receiving the conferment of the title	Consort receiving the conferment of the title	Consort receiving the conferment of the title	Consort receiving the conferment of the title	Performing the rite of Conferment	Delivering the conferment	Consort receiving the conferment of the title
			Warning and toasting	[Emperor's] Warning and toasting	[Emperor's] Warning and toasting	[Emperor's] Warning and toasting		[Emperor's] Warning and toasting
	[Messengers] Welcoming [the empress]	[Messengers] Welcoming [the empress]	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person
							[Emperor's] Warning and toasting	
	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Joining half gourd (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)
			Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress		Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress
			[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and	Consort having an audience with the	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and

			hands and faces and have dinner	hands and faces and have dinner	faces and have dinner	emperor and the empress	hands and faces and have dinner	faces and have dinner
			Providing a dinner to the consort			[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner		
Empress presenting] a memorial of appreciation	Empress presenting] a memorial of appreciation	Empress presenting] a memorial of appreciation						
	Visiting the shrine	Visiting the shrine						Visiting the shrine
[Empress] being congratulated by the appointed ladies	Empress being congratulated the appointed ladies							
Visiting the great shrine								
		[H]Empress being congratulated by the inner and outer appointed ladies		Meeting the officials				
		[H]Emperor being congratulated by the officials						

Table II-9 Marriage rituals in the prefaces, reviews and the prescriptions of the *Mingjili* (From princesses to the commoners)

Princesses			Ranked Officials			Commoners		
Preface	Review	Prescriptions	Preface	Review	Prescriptions	Preface	Review	Prescriptions
Five rites	Submission of choice /asking the name	Submission of choice /asking the name	Five rites	Submission of choice /asking the name	Submission of choice /asking the name	Submission of choice	Submission of choice /asking the name	Submission of choice
	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results		Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results			
	Submission of proof	Submission of proof		Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of the valuables (proof)	Submission of the valuables (proof) (and request of the date)	Submission of the valuables (proof) / request of the date
	Request of the date	Request of the date		Request of the date	Request of the date			
Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person		Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person
	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)		Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)			
			Providing dinner to the escorts					
			Visiting Ancestral shrine		Presentation at the shrine	Visiting the hall of ancestors	Visiting the hall of ancestors	

Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Princess's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws
								Visiting the hall of ancestors
		Making a toast to the woman						
[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner			[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner			
							Providing dinner to the escorts of the man	
						Son-in-law meeting the parents of the woman	Son-in-law meeting the parents of the woman	Son-in-law meeting the parents of the woman
		Providing dinner to the escorts of the man			Father-in-law Providing dinner to the escorts of the man			
					Mother-in-law Providing dinner to the escorts of the woman			Providing dinner to the escorts of the man

Table II-10 The sequences of steps of the marriage rituals in the *Kaiyuan Li* (Bold steps represent the basic sequence. [H] stands for high end steps, [L] for low end steps, [S] for special steps. Same applied to all the following tables.)

Emperor	Heir Apparent	Imperial Princes	Princesses	Ranked Officials
[H] Choosing the date by divination				
[H] Report to the Circular Mound Altar (Heaven)				
[H] Report to the Square Water Altar (Earth)				
[H] [Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers at the front of the palace hall	[H] [Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers at the front of the palace hall			
			[H]Conferment of the title of princess	
Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice
Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name
Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results
Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof
Notification of the date	Notification of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date
[H] Report to the imperial ancestral shrine	[H] Report to the imperial ancestral shrine			
[H] Conferment of the title of empress	[H] Conferment of the title of Consort	[H] Conferment of the title of consort		
	[S][Emperor's] Warning and toasting			
Appointment of the messengers to welcome [the bride]	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person

[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	
Empress having an audience with the empress-dowager	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Wife's meeting with her parents- in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents- in-laws
[H] Empress presenting a memorial of appreciation				
			[L][Wife's] helping her parents-in- law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[L][Wife's] helping her parents- in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner
[H] Empress being congratulated by the Officials				
[H]Meeting with the Officials	[H]Meeting with the Officials			
[H]Empress's meeting with outer appointed ladies				
[H] Officials offering gifts				
Empress's presentation at the shrine				
[H] Empress's Possession from the palace [to the shrine]				
		[L]Marriage Gathering	[L]Marriage Gathering	[L]Marriage Gathering
		[L]Gathering of Women	[L] Gathering of Women	[L] Gathering of Women
		[L]Providing dinner to the escorts of the man	[L]Providing dinner to the escorts of the man	\\
		[L] Providing dinner to the escorts of the woman	[L] Providing dinner to the escorts of the woman	[L] Providing dinner to the escorts of the woman

Table II-11 The sequences of steps of the marriage rituals in the *Zhenghe Li*

Emperor	Heir Apparent	Princes	Princesses	Imperial clansmen below the princes	Female decedents of the imperial clan below princesses	Ranked Officials	Commoners
[H] Report to the Heaven and Earth, the Soil and Grain, the Palaces and the Temples							
[H]Display	[H] Display						
[H][Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers at the front of the palace hall and issuing the decree	[H] [Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers at the front of the palace hall						
Choice	Choice	Choice	Submission of choice/ asking the name	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice/ asking the name
Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name		Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name	
Notification of the auspicious results	Notification of the auspicious results	Notification of the auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results
Notification of the completion (Proof)	Notification of the completion (Proof)	Notification of the completion (Proof)	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof/ request of the date
Notification of the date	Notification of the date	Notification of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	

[H]Report to the Tai Miao, the Jingling Gong and the mausoleum of the deceased imperial ancestors)	[H]Report (Sacrifice offering at the Tai Miao, the Jingling Gong and the mausoleum of the deceased imperial ancestors	[H]Report (Sacrifice offering at the Jingling Gong)	[H]Report (Sacrifice offering at the Jingling Gong)				
[H][Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers at the front of the palace hall to confer and welcome the empress							
[H] Conferment of the title of empress	[H] Conferment of the title of consort	[H] Bestowing the mandate (granting the title)					
	[M1] [Emperor's] Warning and toasting	[M1] [Emperor's] Warning and toasting					
[Messengers] Welcoming [the empress]	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person
[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing the sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	
[H] Empress presenting a memorial of appreciation							

Empress visiting the Jingling Gong				Presentation at the shrine	Presentation at the shrine	Presentation at the shrine	Presentation at the hall of ancestors
	[L]Consort having an audience with the emperor	[L] Lady having an audience with the emperor and the empress	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws
			[L]Making a toast to the woman	[L]Making a toast to the woman	[L]Making a toast to the woman	[L]Making a toast to the woman	[L]Making a toast to the woman
	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	
			[M3] Providing dinner to the woman	[M3] Providing dinner to the woman	[M3] Providing dinner to the woman	[M3] Providing dinner to the woman	
				[L] Father-in-law providing dinner to the escorts	[L]Father-in-law providing dinner to the escorts	[L] Father-in-law providing dinner to the escorts	[L] Providing dinner to the escorts
				[L]Mother-in-law providing dinner to the escorts of the woman	[L] Mother-in-law providing dinner to the escorts of the woman	[L]Mother-in-law providing dinner to the escorts of the woman	

Table II-12 The sequences of steps of the marriage rituals in the *Mingjili*

Emperor	Heir Apparent	Imperial Princes	Princesses	Ranked Officials	Commoners
[H] Dispatching of the messengers	[H] Dispatching of the messengers				
Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice	Submission of choice / asking the name	Submission of choice / asking the name	Submission of choice
Asking the name	Asking the name	Asking the name			
Submission of auspicious results	Notification of the auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	Submission of auspicious results	
Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of proof	Submission of valuebles (proof) / Request of the date
Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	Request of the date	
	Sacrifice offering to the Imperial ancestral shrine				
[H][Emperor's] dispatching of the messengers at the front of the palace hall to confer and welcome the empress	[H] Dispatching of the messengers to deliver the conferment	[H] Dispatching of the messengers to deliver the conferment			
[H] Empress receiving the conferment of the title	[H] Consort receiving the conferment of the title	[H] Consort receiving the conferment of the title			
	[M1] [Emperor's] Warning and toasting	[M1][Emperor's] Warning and toasting			
[Messengers] Welcoming [the empress]	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person	Welcome in person
[H] Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing sacrificial meat	[H] Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)	[H] Sharing sacrificial meat	[H] Sharing sacrificial meat	

	(Ritualised dinner)		(Ritualised dinner)	(Ritualised dinner)	
				*Presentation at the shrine	
	[L] Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	[L] Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	[L] Princess's meeting with her parents-in-laws	[L] Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws	[L] Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws
			[M2] Making a toast to the woman		
	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[M3] [Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	
[H] [Empress presenting] a memorial of appreciation					
Visiting the shrine		Visiting the shrine			Presentation at the hall of the ancestors
[H] Empress being congratulated by the inner and outer appointed ladies					
[H] Emperor being congratulated by the officials					
					[L] Son-in-law meeting the parents of the woman
			[L] Providing dinner to the escorts of the man and woman	[L] Father-in-law providing dinner to the escorts of the man	[L] Providing dinner to the escorts

				[L] Mother-in-law providing dinner to the escorts of the woman	
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Table II-13 The sequences of steps of the marriage rituals in the [Wanli] *Da Ming Huidian* (Those of the ranked officials and the commoners remained the same as the *Mingjili*)

Emperor Zhengtong (7,1442)	Heir Apparent Chenghua 23 (1465)	Imperial Princes		Princesses Hongwu 26 (1393)
		Hongwu 26 (1393)	Hongwu 27 (1394)	
				Conferring the title on the princess
				Commandant- escort receiving the edict (<i>Zhusi Zhizhang</i>)
				Visiting the shrine
Submission of choice / asking the name	Submission of choice / asking the name			
Submission of auspicious gifts/ submission of proof/ notifying the date	Submission of proof / notifying the date/ conferring the title	Submission of proof	submission of the proof, dispatching the <i>ce</i> and expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]	
		performing the rite of the submission of the proof at the consort's family (<i>Zhusi zhizhang</i>)		
		Issuing the conferment and appointing the messengers		
		Arrival of conferment at the consort's Family	Acceptance of the engagement by the consort's family	
		[Consort] receiving the conferment of the title		
		Decking the room		

		[Emperor's] warning and toasting		
Issuing the conferment and welcome the [empress] （禮物）	[Emperor's] warning and toasting	Toasting and Warning at the consort's Family Residence		Warning and making a toast to the princess
	Toasting and warning at the consort's family residence	Welcome in person		Warning and making a toast to the commandant-escort
	Welcome in person	Presentation at the shrine		Welcome in person
Presentation at the shrine		Joining half Gourd (Ritualised dinner)		Visiting the Hall of Ancestors
Joining half Gourd (Ritualised dinner)	Joining half Gourd (Ritualised dinner)	[Imperial Prince and his Consort's] audience with the empress and the empress		Joining half Gourd (Ritualised dinner)
[Empress's] audience with the emperor emeritus and empress dowager	[Consort's] audience with the empress and the empress			Wife's meeting with her parents-in-laws
Empress greeting the emperor		[Wife's] helping her parents- in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner		
Emperor and empress being congratulated				
[Wife's] helping her parents- in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner	[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner			
	Presentation at the shrine			
	Celebrations			
		Visit of imperial Prince and his consort to the eastern palace (heir apparent)		
		First visit to the consort's family		

Chapter III.

Ancestral Sacrifice: Stage Two (Hongwu 8-26)

Although a number of prescriptions for the marriage rituals of imperial princes from the Hongwu reign are extant (e.g. Hongwu 1, 3, 26, 27),¹ only one detailed record of actual practice is found in Hongwu 8 in the *Taizu Shilu* 太祖實錄 (Veritable Records of Emperor Taizu). This concerns the second marriage of the Prince of Qin (Zhu Shuang 朱榑 1356 -1395), which marked the start of the second stage in the development of marriage policy for imperial princes. As the oldest imperial prince, the Prince of Qin's first marriage took place in the ninth moon of Hongwu 4. His primary consort was the younger sister of the Mongolian general KöKö Temür. In Hongwu 6 the second oldest prince (the 3rd son of the emperor),² the Prince of Jin (Zhu Gang 朱櫓 1358-1398) married the daughter of Xie Cheng 謝成 (?-1394) who was at the time the Prince of Jin's mentor (晉王左傅, rank 2b) and the regional military commissioner of Taiyuan (*duzhihuishi* 都指揮使, rank 3a). It took another six years for Xie Cheng to be ennobled as Marquis of Yongping (永平侯).

In the eleventh moon of Hongwu 8 (1375), the Prince of Qin married again to a daughter of Duke of State Wei (衛), Deng Yu 鄧愈 (1338-1378).³ In the following year the emperor's 4th son, the Prince of Yan (Zhu Di 朱棣 1360-1424, later emperor Yongle, r. 1402-1424) married the daughter of Duke of State Wei (魏), Xu Da 徐達

¹ 1368, 1370, 1393, 1394, respectively.

² The oldest son was the heir apparent, the Prince of Qin was the second oldest.

³ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 102:1717–1720.

(1332-1385).⁴ In the next year the 5th son, the Prince of Wu (later the Prince of Zhou 朱橚, 1361-1425) married the daughter of Duke of State Song, Feng Sheng 馮勝 (?-1395).⁵ The title of duke was the highest rank granted to officials not related to the emperor during the Hongwu reign.⁶ By Hongwu 8 there were in total five living military officials who held the title of duke. Besides the aforementioned Deng Yu, Xu Da and Feng Sheng there were Chang Mao 常茂 (?-1391) and 李文忠 Li Wenzhong (1339-1384). Chang Mao was ennobled as Duke of State Zheng because of the meritorious deeds of his father, the deceased Chang Yuchun 常遇春 (1330-1369). Except Chang Mao,⁷ the other four dukes had been the main generals responsible for leading military campaigns as well as other military and administrative activities from the foundation of the dynasty to their own demise. Li Wenzhong was a blood relative - the son of the emperor's deceased sister. Apart from Li all other functioning dukes were affiliated as in-laws of imperial princes between Hongwu 8 and Hongwu 10 (1377). Moreover, from Hongwu 8 to Hongwu 26 all the imperial princes were matched up with daughters of ennobled meritorious officials (or those who were about to be ennobled).

Meanwhile Hongwu 8 was also a turning point for the marriage rituals for imperial princes.⁸ Consort Deng was only appointed as a secondary consort (*cifei* 次

⁴ Ibid., 103: 1737.

⁵ Ibid., 113: 1864.

⁶ This remark disregarded the titles bestowed posthumously.

⁷ The first military service of Chang Mao was in Hongwu 20 (1387) as recorded by Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 125:3737.

⁸ In this marriage ritual the *cuihuang* 催妝 (expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]) step was recorded as “[it was practiced] in the same way as that for the [primary] consort of an imperial prince” (與親王妃同). The *cuihuang* was absent in the prescriptions of the *Mingjili*. This suggests that the earlier practices of marriage rituals for the imperial princes might have

妃) as the primary consort was still alive. Nevertheless the ritual for their marriage was the only case among all of the Hongwu imperial princes which was recorded step by step in the *Veritable Records*. The surviving records of the practice of the rituals of the Prince of Qin's second marriage deviate from the prescriptions made at the beginning of the reign.

Compared to the former prescriptions, steps from the classics and precedents were dismissed in the Hongwu 8 practice. The first step of the practice was the submission of the proof (*nazheng* 納徵), the fourth step of the marriage ritual in the classic *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Ceremonials). On the other hand, additional steps were introduced from customs such as decking the room (鋪房) and the visit to the wife's family (回門). Although these arrangements seemed informal and could be partially due to the fact that consort Deng was the secondary consort, the practice had an influence on later prescriptions. The Hongwu 26 (1393) prescriptions restored several steps from the classics and the precedents that had been dismissed in Hongwu 8. However this set of prescriptions also started the marriage ritual at the submission of the proof and ended it with the returning visit to the consort's family. Within the time between these two steps, the Hongwu 26 prescriptions combined the steps from the Hongwu 3 (1370) prescriptions and the Hongwu 8 practice and generally kept to the schedule of the steps as from their sources. The only exception was the ancestral

already deviated from the prescriptions and included the customs such like *cui Zhuang*. On the other hand this specific remark for the *cui Zhuang* also suggests that all the other steps in this marriage ritual were very likely to be different from the earlier practices of the marriage rituals of imperial princes. Furthermore, on the grounds that this was the only detailed recorded practice and the great influence it had over the later prescriptions, the innovative steps in this marriage ritual were probably not for the special case of marrying the secondary consort, but a general revision of the marriage rituals of imperial princes.

sacrifice step, since it appears in both the precedent prescriptions and the practice but with its treatment changed significantly.⁹

In the Hongwu 3 prescriptions for the imperial princes the ancestral sacrifice was clearly termed as “visiting the shrine” 謁廟 (*yemiao*) and placed at the end of the marriage ritual.¹⁰ In Hongwu 8, the ancestral sacrifice was scheduled on the day of the consort’s arrival at the palace and conducted by the bride and groom in the Fengxian Dian 奉先殿 (Hall of Serving Forbears). Compared to the previous prescriptions, the timing of the ancestral sacrifice was moved from the end to the middle of the ritual, and the venue was relocated from the Tai Miao to Fengxian Dian in the Hongwu 8 practice. Furthermore it represented the first time that both bride and groom participated in the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage rituals for imperial princes.¹¹ The Hongwu 26 prescriptions adapted the arrangement from Hongwu 8 and further employed a term from the classics, i.e. “presentation at the shrine” (廟見 *miaojian*) as the heading for the step. The resulting step for ancestral sacrifice stems from a variety of sources, both innovative and based on precedents. The timing and participants are comparable to a marriage custom in the Song dynasty, the venue of Fengxian Dian, an inner imperial shrine, was a novelty introduced in the Hongwu reign and the step was referred to using a term from the classics originally referring to the woman’s sacrifice,

⁹ For the developments in the marriage rituals of the imperial princes during the Hongwu reign, see Table III-5 (appended to the chapter).

¹⁰ It only has a vague reference as “see the section for conferring and installing [titles]” (見冊拜篇), yet there were no prescriptions for conferring the consorts of imperial princes.

¹¹ In the Tang prescriptions (*Kaiyuan Li*) there were no offerings to imperial ancestors in the marriage rituals for imperial princes, in the Song prescriptions (*Zhenghe Li*) the offering is arranged by the relevant offices. Alternatively there were also ancestral sacrifices performed by the wife. The arrangement for both of the couple to perform ancestral sacrifice was developed much later and lacked classical precedent. More details on this are provided in the following text.

and specifically bearing a symbolic meaning regarding the woman's relation to her husband's family.

This chapter probes into the historical development of the ancestral sacrifice in marriage rituals as well as how it changed in the second stage of the Hongwu reign. I will start with a review of the discussion on the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage rituals in classic studies and its variations in the precedent prescriptions. A further investigation will be carried out into the development of the different imperial ancestral shrines involved in marriage and other rituals to analyse the uses of the Tai Miao and Fengxian Dian in the Hongwu Reign. By examining the political developments around the same period, I will argue that the change to the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage rituals introduced in Hongwu 8 actually resulted from a new form of power structure designed by the emperor based on a clear division between "inner" and "outer" members of the imperial family. These changes were introduced in the Hongwu 8 ritual practice, the first 'turning point' for the changes in the emperor's marriage policy for imperial princes and further standardised in the prescriptions compiled in Hongwu 26, that is, the second turning point.

THE DISPUTES AND THE VARIATIONS OF THE ANCESTRAL SACRIFICE IN THE MARRIAGE RITUALS

The ancestral sacrifice is one of the most disputed aspects of the marriage ritual in studies of the classics.¹² In the marriage ritual for the *shi* 士 (ordinary officials) from the classic *Yili*,¹³ sacrifice at the shrine is not a compulsory step. Only in the

¹² In the scope of this thesis the ancestral sacrifice refers to the sacrificial offering to the man's family shrine(s) unless otherwise specified.

¹³ *Yili Zhushu*, 4: 42.

supplementary notes appended to the main manual is it stated that if the husband's parents died before the marriage ritual the wife would be required to offer vegetables to their shrine three months after the wedding day. The sub-commentator Jia Gongyan 賈公彥 (7 century) interpreted this as a description of the wife's "presentation at the shrine".¹⁴

A symbolic meaning was given to the "presentation at the shrine" in "the questions of Zengzi" (曾子問 *Zengzi wen*) in the *Liji* 禮記 (Record of Rituals), stating:

[After] three months [the bride] then presents [herself at] the shrine and [she] calls [herself] the joined wife. A day is chosen [for her] to sacrifice at the shrine of her father-in-law, which means [her] becoming the established wife.

三月而廟見，稱來婦也。擇日而祭於禴，成婦之義也。¹⁵

"The questions of Zengzi" continues to elaborate on this symbolic meaning, suggesting that a woman who died before "presentation at the shrine" would not be buried with her husband's family to "show that [she] had not become an established wife."¹⁶ The principle commentators of the *Liji*, Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) and Kong Yingda 孔穎達 (574-648), were both in agreement with the *Yili* commentator

¹⁴ Ibid., 6: 59.

¹⁵ *Liji Zhushu*, 18: 366.

¹⁶ Ibid: 示未成婦也.

Jia Gongyan, explaining the “presentation at the shrine” as only necessary when the husband’s parents were dead.¹⁷

However, even during the Han dynasty, the period of the reconstruction of the ritual classics, there were objections to this explanation. For example Ban Gu 班固 (32-92) argued that the “presentation at the shrine” was not equivalent to the sacrificing at the shrine of the father-in-law. In his understanding, the “presentation at the shrine” was the wife’s offering to the spirits of all her husband’s ancestors, that is, a step that would take place no matter whether her parents-in-law were alive or dead at the time of the marriage. The three months was to be regarded as a period to qualify the wife, as

[During] a period of three months, [the time period for] a being to develop, a person’s virtue [and/or] vice will get to be known.

三月一時，物有成者，人之善惡可得知也。¹⁸

Only at the end of the three months could the qualified bride progress to the “presentation at the shrine”. In other words on this view the sacrificial offering is regarded as being directed at all of the ancestors at the husband’s ancestral shrine and as a conclusive step of the marriage ritual.

Further opinions emerged from the readings of a story in the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (Zuo’s Narrative of Spring and Autumn):

¹⁷ Ibid., 18:366.

¹⁸ Ban Gu, *Baihu Tong*, 4a [“jiaqu”]: 256–257.

On the *jiacheng* day of the fourth moon, the son of Duke of Zheng, Hu arrived from Chen to meet lady Gui. On the *xinhai* day [he] returned with lady Gui. On the *jiayin* day [they] entered Zheng. Zhenzi from Chen escorted the lady. [The couple] united first and then [offered sacrifice to] the ancestors. Zhenzi said: “these [two] are not husband and wife, as they have dishonoured their ancestors [and their behaviours] do not [comply with the] rituals, by what means they can cultivate [their youngsters]?”

四月甲辰，鄭公子忽如陳逆婦媯。辛亥以媯氏歸。甲寅入于鄭。陳鍼子送女。先配而後祖。鍼子曰：“是不為夫婦，誣其祖矣，非禮也，何以能育。”¹⁹

According to this passage, in the proper rituals for marriage the ancestral sacrifice (*zu* 祖) should be performed before the uniting of the couple (*pei* 配). However the exact meanings of ancestral sacrifice and the uniting have long been the subject of debate.²⁰

¹⁹ The *jiacheng*, *xinhai* and *jiayin* day are the 41st, 48th and 51st day of the sixty-day of *gan* 干 (stems [and] branches) circle. *Chunqiu Zuo* 春秋左傳, 4:74.

²⁰ For example, Zheng Zhong 鄭眾 (?-114) regarded the uniting as a shared dinner by the couple which symbolised their union. In his opinion the couple disrespected the ancestor as they failed to offer sacrifice to the ancestors before eating. Nevertheless Du Yu 杜預 (222-285) suggested that the ancestral sacrifice served to notify the shrine of the man's family before the picking up of the woman and the sexual relationship. Jia Kui 賈逵 (174-228) explained the ancestral sacrifice as the “presentation at the shrine” after three months and the uniting as the start of the sexual relationship. There was another explanation offered by Zheng Xuan who explained the ancestral sacrifice as an offering to the ancestral beings before the journey (from Chen to Zheng) to expel the evils. Thus the story implies the couple had had sexual intercourse as early as before departing Chen, thus they were criticised by the Zhenzi. All the interpretation are quoted from Kong Yingda who supported the explanation of the notice to the man's family ancestral shrine in *Ibid.*, 4:74. In his sub commentary to the *Liji*, Kong also suggested that the notice to the man's family shrine was comparable to the sacrifice to the lady's family shrine in the six rites when the marriage negotiation is carried out. *Liji Zhushu*, 2:38. The modern commentator Yang Bojun also supports the explanation as notice to the

Apart from the various opinions on the timing and meaning of the “presentation at the shrine”, an additional idea was suggested that it should be a step in the marriage rituals for the classes above the *dafu* (大夫 Counsellor) since the main characters of this story were both from the upper classes.²¹ The controversy passed on to later generations of scholars who passionately and continuously contributed their own arguments to it.²²

In a nutshell the terms referring to the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage rituals could be “offering vegetables” (奠菜), “notifying the shrine” (告廟) and “presentation at the shrine” (廟見). The relationship between these terms and the procedures they stand for are still under debate. Furthermore conflicting conditions were proposed for the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage rituals, whether it should be a compulsory step, or a step to substitute for the wife’s meeting with the husband’s parents when they were dead, or a step exclusive to the upper classes. The schedule of the ancestral sacrifice was also in question – it could be before the marriage, before the sexual intercourse and/or three months after the woman’s arrival in her husband’s family.²³ The scholarly disagreement resulted in practical challenges to the compilation of the ritual prescriptions. For the compilers of the later prescriptions, the selections of the

shrine, however in his reading Kong supported the idea of Zheng (i.e. *zu* as a sacrificial offering to ancestral beings before the journey).

²¹ Suggested by Jia Kui 賈逵 and Fu Qian 服虔 (around 2nd century) as Kong Yingda quoted them in *Liji Zhushu*, 18:366.

²² For summaries of the protracted disputes in classical studies see Cao Tingdong, *Hunli Tongkao*, 426–436; 573–585 [5: “gaomiao”, 18: “miaojian”, respectively] . Li Yuancheng, “Xianpeihouzu Shen Du Shuo Bing Lun Miaojian Zhinü Fanma Zhuyi.” Lin Sujuan, “Gudai Hunli Miaojianchengfu Shuo Wenti Tanjiu.” And Zeng Shengyi, “Liu Shouzeng Hunli Zhongbie Lundui Boyi Shulun.”

²³ For summaries of the protracting dispute in classical studies see Cao Tingdong, *Hunli Tongkao*, 426–436; 573–585 [5: “gaomiao”, 18: “miaojian”, respectively] . Li Yuancheng, “Xianpeihouzu Shen Du Shuo Bing Lun Miaojian Zhinü Fanma Zhuyi.” Lin Sujuan, “Gudai Hunli Miaojianchengfu Shuo Wenti Tanjiu.” And Zeng Shengyi, “Liu Shouzeng Hunli Zhongbie Lundui Boyi Shulun.”

term, the condition and the schedule for the steps were subject to their own understandings and implementations.

Table III-1 Ancestral sacrifice steps in the *Kaiyuan Li*

	Emperor	Heir Apparent	Imperial Princes	Princesses	Ranked Officials
Pre-wedding	Notifying the shrine	Notifying the shrine	None	No separate step (included in the “welcome in person” step)	No separate step (included in the “welcome in person” step)
Post-wedding	Empress’s presentation at the shrine	None-	None	None	None

Consequently, the treatment of the ancestral sacrifice in the prescriptions for the marriage rituals varied from period to period.²⁴ To give a very rough account there are usually two types of steps prescribed for the ancestral sacrifice in marriage rituals, one between the agreement of the marriage and the groom’s picking up his bride from her family (henceforth the pre-wedding step) that is normally termed as “notifying the shrine” (告廟) or similar; the other after the new couple’s first night together (henceforth the post-wedding step) that is referred to as “presentation at the shrine”, “[the wife’s] visiting the shrine” (謁廟) or similar. In the earliest extant official prescription, the *Kaiyuan Li* 開元禮 (Ritual of Kaiyuan [reign 713 AD -741 AD]) no post-wedding step is prescribed in the marriage rituals for any of the classes other than the emperor.²⁵ On the other hand the empress is prescribed to meet only the empress dowager whereas for all the other classes the corresponding step prescribes the meeting of the wife with her parents-in-law. Therefore the “empress’s presentation at

²⁴ The arrangements of the ancestral sacrifice steps in the *Kaiyuan Li*, *Zhenghe Li* and *Mingjili* are listed in the Table III-1, Table III-2, and Table III-3, respectively.

²⁵ Xiao Song, *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*, 94: 445–446[6b–8a].

the shrine” step in her marriage ritual is possibly based on the assumption that the emperor’s father would be dead at the time of the emperor’s marriage.²⁶ In this sense the *Kaiyuan Li* appears to follow Jia Gongyan’s sub-commentary which treats the “presentation at the shrine” as a step only taking place when the groom’s parent(s) had died before the marriage. For the pre-wedding ancestral sacrifice, a separate step is prescribed for the marriage rituals of the emperor and the heir apparent,²⁷ whereas for the ranked officials it is included under the “welcoming in person” (*qinying* 親迎) step as a brief sacrifice performed by the groom’s father before the groom sets off to pick up his bride.²⁸

A shift in the attitude towards the post-wedding ancestral sacrifice can be observed by comparing two influential prescriptions from the Song dynasty (960-1279), the *Shuyi* 書儀 (Letters and Etiquette) compiled by Sima Guang 司馬光 (1019-1086) and the *Jiali* 家禮 (Family Rituals) by Zhu Xi 朱熹 (1130-1200). In the former work, the *Shuyi*, there is no post-wedding sacrifice. The author Sima Guang showed sympathy to Jia Gongyan’s opinion with an explicit statement that the “presentation at the shrine” was an additional step in ancient time when the parents-in-law were dead.²⁹ In fact Sima Guang completely abandoned the “presentation at the shrine” in the *Shuyi*. He introduced a procedure “courtesy to the ancestors’ spirits” (拜先靈 *bai xianling*) from his contemporary custom after the bride’s first arrival at the groom’s

²⁶ I.e. in the case that the emperor did not marry to his primary wife when he was the heir apparent.

²⁷ Emperor’s prescriptions in Xiao Song, *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*, 93:441[14a]. Heir apparent in Ibid., 111:523[9a].

²⁸ “Welcome in person” (親迎) is a step for the groom to pick up the bride from her family in person. Xiao Song, *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*, 123:580[7a], 124:588[7a], 125:596[7a].

²⁹ The note to “*fu jian gujiu*” in Sima Guang, *Shuyi*, 4: 3.

house and claimed that there was no need to visit the shrine again during the marriage ritual.³⁰ Sima Guang's arrangement was disapproved of by Zhu Xi who commented that the proper order should be from low to high, from the shared dinner and night between the couple, followed by the wife's meeting with the parents-in-law and after three months the wife's visit to her husband's family shrine.³¹ His *Jiali* prescribes the "presentation at the shrine" as a post-wedding step three days after the "wife's presentation to parents-in-law" (婦見舅姑 *fu jian jiugu*).³² Hence Zhu Xi allied himself with the opinion of Ban Gu and regarded the "presentation at the shrine" as a compulsory step after the wedding day. Despite the disagreement over the post-wedding steps, both the *Shuyi* and the *Jiali* describe the pre-wedding sacrifice as the leader of the groom's clan offering a sacrifice at the shrine before sending out the messengers at the beginning of the "submission of the choice".³³

Compiled slightly earlier than the *Jiali*, in the *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi* 政和五禮新儀 (New Etiquettes for the Five Rituals of Zhenghe [reign 1111-1118], hereafter *Zhenghe Li*) the treatment of the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage ritual showed a great connection to the state hierarchy. For those ranked below the princes and the princesses, a separate step of the post-wedding sacrifice coexisted with the bride's visit

³⁰ Ibid. "Bai xianling" in Ibid., 3:8b-9a.

³¹ Zhu Xi, *Zhuizi Yulei*, 89: 3000-3001.

³² Three days instead of three months to promote its practice in his contemporary time. See Zhu Xi, *Jiali*, 3:900.

³³ Sima Guang, *Shuyi*, 3:2. Zhu Xi, *Jiali*, 3:896. An additional ancestral sacrifice by the leader of the groom's clan in the step "welcome in person" is prescribed by the *Jiali*. Ibid., 3:898. Therefore the "courtesy to the ancestors' spirits" prescribed by Sima Guang is sometimes explained as another type of the notice to the ancestors in the step "welcome in person". For example Qing scholar Cao Tingdong 曹庭棟 (1699-1785) sees the "courtesy to the ancestors' spirits" as a substitute for the notification to the shrine before the welcome in person and disapproves this treatment in Cao Tingdong, *Hunli Tongkao*, 5:429[8b].

to her parents-in-law.³⁴ For the senior classes there would be no post-wedding sacrifice, with the exception of the empress who was to visit the imperial ancestral shrine at the Jingling Gong 景靈宮 (Palace of Admiring the Spirits) at the conclusion of the marriage ritual.³⁵ On the other hand the arrangement of the pre-wedding sacrifice in the *Zhenghe Li* is close to that of the *Kaiyuan Li*: a separate step is prescribed for the marriage rituals of the emperor, the heir apparent, the princes and princesses,³⁶ whereas the lower section of the social hierarchy is prescribed a brief sacrifice at the ancestors shrine at the beginning of the “welcome in person”.³⁷ Moreover for the members of the imperial family there exists a scale of the shrines to be involved in their marriage rituals. Notices needed to be sent to the Tai Miao, the Jingling Gong and the mausoleum of the deceased imperial ancestors for marriages of the emperor and the heir apparent, whereas only a notice to the Jingling Gong was needed for the marriages of princes and princesses.

The above section reveals that the scaling of the marriage ritual added an extra variable to the ancestral sacrifice in the official prescriptions besides the unsolved disputes on the terms, conditions and schedules in the classical studies. In particular among all the classes the imperial princes always received special treatment with regard to the ancestral sacrifice in their marriage rituals, which also varied from

³⁴ i.e. for female and male members of imperial clan below the prince and princess and for ranked officials in Zheng Juzhong, *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi*, 176:9a, 177:8b. There is a mistake in the commoner's prescriptions where the prescriptions for the daughters from the imperial clan are mistakenly included which created an inconsistency in Ibid., 179:789[4a–b]. However a “presentation [in the shrine of the] grandfather and father” appears in both the index at the beginning of the commoner's prescriptions and the overall index, Ibid., 179:788[1b], 1[index 5]:25[19a].

³⁵ Zheng Juzhong, *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi*, 170:1a–4a.

³⁶ Ibid., 168:1a; 172:7a; 174:6b; 175:4b.

³⁷ Ibid., 176:7a, 177:6b, 178:7a.

dynasty to dynasty. The imperial princes formed the only group that did not offer a sacrifice to the husband's ancestors in the marriage rituals of the *Kaiyuan Li*,³⁸ and it was among the only two groups (out of eight, the other group was that of the princesses) who did not have the post-wedding sacrifice in the *Zhenghe Li*. Furthermore, the differentiation in the imperial ancestral shrines was introduced into the marriage ritual prescriptions by the *Zhenghe Li*. The multiple imperial shrines were selectively employed to illustrate the inner hierarchy of the imperial family where the imperial princes were placed at a level lower than the emperor and the heir apparent. In contrast, although the Ming established the Tai Miao and Fengxian Dian as two imperial shrines, all the prescriptions issued by the Ming government use the same shrine for the marriages rituals for all imperial family members. Hence there appears to have been a development in the ideology of the imperial family represented by the imperial shrine(s) during the Hongwu reign. The following sections will trace the history of the multiple imperial shrines in order to reconstruct the theoretical background for the innovation in imperial shrine(s) and their involvements in marriage rituals during the Hongwu reign.³⁹

³⁸ It prescribes at the beginning of the "welcome in person" that the consort's father to perform ancestral sacrifice whereas the man's father perform ancestral in all the lower classes. The higher classes (the emperor and the heir apparent) have the separated step of "notifying the shrine" so do not have this procedure.

³⁹ The following section of historical review focuses on textual records as they were the main source materials for the Hongwu emperor and his ritual compilers, thus it does make any suggestion about the real practices and/or modern archaeological discoveries.

Table III-2 Ancestral sacrifice steps in the *Zhenghe Li*

	Emperor	Heir Apparent	Princes	Princesses	Imperial clansmen below the princes/ Female decedents of the imperial clan below princesses/ Ranked Officials	Commoners
Pre-wedding	Report to the Tai Miao, the Jingling Gong and the mausoleum of the deceased imperial ancestors)	Report (Sacrifice offering at the Tai Miao, the Jingling Gong and the mausoleum of the deceased imperial ancestors	Report (Sacrifice offering at the Jingling Gong)	Report (Sacrifice offering at the Jingling Gong)	No separate Step (included in the “welcome in person” step)	No separate Step (included in the “welcome in person” step)
Post-wedding	Empress visiting the Jingling Gong	None	None	None	Presentation at the shrine	Presentation at the hall of ancestors

Table III-3 Ancestral sacrifice steps in the *Mingjili*

	Emperor	Heir Apparent	Imperial Princes	Princesses	Ranked Officials	Commoners
Pre-wedding	--	Sacrifice offering to the Imperial ancestral shrine	--	--	--	--
Post-wedding	Visiting the shrine	--	Visiting the shrine	--	Presentation at the shrine	Presentation at the hall of the ancestors

MULTIPLE IMPERIAL SHRINES: FROM YUAN MIAO (ORIGIN
SHRINE) TO JINGLING GONG (PALACE OF ADMIRING THE
SPIRITS)

The discussion of the multiplicity of imperial ancestral shrine(s) mainly focuses on the number and the selection of deceased ancestors to be worshiped in the ancestral shrine. This aspect has been explored with different approaches for examining changes across the dynasties.⁴⁰ However it merely covers one of the dimensions raised by the multiplicity of imperial ancestral shrine(s). Other dimensions include the physical arrangement of imperial shrine(s). For example a change occurred during the Eastern Han (25-220) when the deceased emperors were grouped into two shrines instead of the erection of an individual shrine for each of the emperors as in the Western Han (206BC -9). The two shrines named after the two founding emperors, the Gao Miao 高廟 (Shrine of [Emperor] Gao [zu], 256-195BC, r. 202-195BC) and the Shizu Miao 世祖廟 (Shrine of [Emperor] Shi[zu], 5BC-57, r. 25-57) held the emperors of Western Han and Eastern Han, respectively. The conversion of several individual shrines into two grouping shrines is considered to be a deliberate differentiation of the Eastern Han from the Western Han.⁴¹ Another facet of the multiplicity is the existence of the multiple shrines for one or one group of imperial ancestors.

The Han imperial ancestral shrines had been placed in the kingdoms until the reign of emperor Yuan of Han (76-33BC, 49-33BC), who decreed to abolish them

⁴⁰ The numbers of ancestors to be housed in the shrine normally followed a descending order from the emperor to the rest of the social hierarchy. A review on the different work focusing on this topic can be found in Hong Mingcong, "Tang Song Jiamiao Zhidu Yanjiu Huigu Yu Zhanwang (1988-2009)."

⁴¹ This system was formulated by the second emperor of the Eastern Han, emperor Mingdi 明帝 (28-75), see Guo Shanbing, "Han Tang Huangdi Zongmiao Zhidu Yanjiu," 114-116.

probably due to the decline in revenue. Nevertheless the Yuan Miao 原廟 (Origin Shrine) was kept for the founding emperor Gaozu as an additional shrine. According to the *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Scribe):

For [his] paying formal respect to [his mother at] the Palace of Lasting Joy (Changle Gong), and visits at leisure time [since] the repetitive clearing up of the road was troublesome, emperor Xiaohui (211-188BC, r.195-188BC) [decided to] build an elevated walkway, the construction just [reached] the south of the arsenal. [At the time when] Shusong reported affairs he asked for moment of leisure [to speak with the emperor in private], asking:” why did your majesty arrogate to yourself the construction of the elevated walkway [towards the direction of] the tomb of Gao[zu], while the caps and robes [of Gaozu] are taken out to the shrine of Gao [zu] monthly? The shrine of the Gaozu [is for] the Great Ancestor of the Han, how could [you] allow his descendants to walk upon the path to the ancestral shrine?” Emperor Xiaohui was terrified, saying:” Demolish it at once.” Shusong said:” The ruler of people does not make mistakes. Now it is already being built, people all know it. Now [if you] demolish this [elevated walkway], [it would] indicate that a mistake had been made. [I] propose that your majesty [erect] an origin shrine at the north of the river Wei, to which the caps and robes [of Gaozu may] be taken out monthly. [The] enlargement and the increase of the number of the ancestral shrines are [in any case] the foundation of sincere

filial piety.” The emperor then decreed the relevant office to erect the Origin Shrine. The establishment of the Origin Shrine was due to [this] elevated walkway.

孝惠帝為東朝長樂宮，及閒往，數蹕煩人，迺作複道，方築武庫南。叔孫生奏事，因請閒曰：「陛下何自築複道高寢，衣冠月出游高廟？高廟，漢太祖，奈何令後世子孫乘宗廟道上行哉？」孝惠帝大懼，曰：「急壞之。」叔孫生曰：「人主無過舉。今已作，百姓皆知之，今壞此，則示有過舉。願陛下原廟渭北，衣冠月出游之，益廣多宗廟，大孝之本也。」上迺詔有司立原廟。原廟起，以複道故。⁴²

Elevated walkways were popular means to connect the palaces in the Qin (221-207BC) and Western Han.⁴³ Emperor Xiaohui resided in the Weiyang Gong 未央宮 (Palace of Eternity) which was in the west of Chang'an while the empress dowager resided in the Changle Gong in the east of Chang'an.⁴⁴ According to Shusun, the elevated walkway connecting the two palaces would go over the path between the

⁴² Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 99:2725–2726. Translation from Burton Watson is consulted though some modifications were made according to the literal arrangement of the original text.

⁴³ For details see Yang Kuan, *Zhongguo Gudai Ducheng Zhidushi Yanjiu*, 114–115.

⁴⁴ Sima, *Records of the Grand Historian*, I:296–297. The arsenal was built in between the two palaces to the west of Anmen 安門 Street. Yang Kuan, *Zhongguo Gudai Ducheng Zhidushi Yanjiu*, 109–113. The Gao Miao was also inside Chang'an city, possibly to the east of the Anmen street, as suggested in Liu Qingzhu, “Guanyu Xi Han Diling Xingzhi Zhuwenti Tantao,” 231. The tomb of Gaozu was outside Chang'an at the north of the river Wei, for a map and description of the imperial tombs of the Western Han emperors; see also Loewe, *Divination, Mythology and Monarchy in Han China*, 274–286.

shrine and the tomb of the Gaozu. Hence the Yuan Miao was erected as a cover-up for this elevated walkway that was considered to be a mistake.⁴⁵

In the Song dynasty the use of the Yuan Miao had been seen as a precedent for using imperial ancestral shrines other than the Tai Miao, for example the Jingling Gong. The term “Yuan Miao” was also widely adapted to refer to such shrines,⁴⁶ though significant differences exist between the Han and Song “Yuan Miao”. For example, as with most of the post-Han dynasties the Song dynasty adapted the grouping of the imperial ancestors;⁴⁷ so unlike the Han dynasty, in which the Yuan Miao was exclusive for the emperor Gaozu, the “Yuan Miao” in the Song dynasty hosted all the imperial ancestors that were chosen to be worshipped.⁴⁸ Another crucial difference is that the “Yuan Miao” Jingling Gong in the Song dynasty had been a Taoist temple. The emperor Zhenzong 真宗 (968-1022, r. 997-1022) erected it for the alleged dynastic ancestor Zhao Xuanlang 趙玄朗 (sometimes Zhao Yuanlang 趙元朗) who was claimed to a Taoist deity. After the death of emperor Zhenzong, his son, the emperor Renzong 仁宗 (1010-1063, r. 1022-1063) placed Zhenzong’s sculpture in the Jingling Gong. The emperor Shenzong 神宗 (1048-1085, r. 1067-1085) moved the

⁴⁵ In the fifth year of the reign of emperor Huixiao (191-190BC) the palace of Gaozu in the Pei (modern Jiangsu) was also converted into a Yuan Miao. Sima Qian, *Shiji*, 8:393. The Yuan Miao to the north of the river Wei appears to be the first one to be established though neither *Shiji* nor *Hanshu* specified the time of its construction. Later scholar suggested the fourth year of the reign of emperor Huixiao (192-191BC), e.g. see Ma Duanlin, *Wenxian Tongkao*, 91:830.

⁴⁶ Tuotuo, *Song Shi*, 109:2624.

⁴⁷ Guo Shanbing, “Han Tang Huangdi Zongmiao Zhidu Yanjiu,” 137–207, 207–263. There were different arrangements of the group of the imperial ancestors, i.e. either they were put into different rooms of a hall or individual halls were built for them in the shrine, but generally speaking they were housed in one shrine in contrast to the individual shrines of imperial ancestors (at different spots) in the Western Han dynasty.

⁴⁸ Two plans of the halls of the imperial ancestors in Jingling Gong can be found in Azuma, “Sō Dai No Kei Rei Kyū Nitsuite: Dōkyō Saishi to Juka Saishi No Kōsa,” 299,300.

statutes of more imperial ancestors to the expanded Jingling Gong and formally converted the Daoist temple into an imperial ancestral shrine. Rituals derived from both Daoist origins and Confucian traditions were practiced in the Jingling Gong.⁴⁹ Imperial portraits were displayed in the Jingling Gong whereas there is no evidence that the Han “Yuan Miao” housed the portraits of Gaozu.⁵⁰

In fact the models of the Song “Yuan Miao” are more likely to be the Taoist temples in the Tang dynasty in which imperial portraits were displayed, for example the Taiqing Gong 太清宮 (Palace of Great Clarity). Similar to the Jingling Gong, the Taiqing Gong was for the alleged dynastic ancestor of the Tang dynasty, Laozi 老子.

⁵¹ In the Tang dynasty the Taiqing Gong and the Tang Tai Miao formed a pair of ancestral shrines which separately held imperial tablets and imperial portraits.⁵² A similar case applied to the Jingling Gong and the Tai Miao in the Song. However, when the Taiqing Gong was first created in the reign of Emperor Xuanzong of the Tang 唐玄宗 (685-762, r. 712-756) the statues of the emperor and his son were also placed in it.⁵³ In addition, the statues of Xuanzong’s prime ministers, i.e. Li Linfu 李

⁴⁹ Details on development of the Jingling Gong and the rituals practices see Ibid., 286–320. Also Wang Shengduo, *Songdai Zhengjiao Guanxi Yanjiu*, 597–612.

⁵⁰ Details regarding the usage of portraits and statues see Ebrey, “Portrait Sculptures in Imperial Ancestral Rites in Song China.”

⁵¹ For details on the Taiqing Gong see Kaneko, *Chūgoku Kodai Kōtei Saishi No Kenkyū*, 356–368. Laozi was referred as Emperor Xuanyuan 玄元皇帝.

⁵² The usage of imperial portraits in the Taiqing Gong and other temples see Lei Wen, *Jiao Miao Zhiwai*, 121–125.

⁵³ The statues of emperor Xuanzong and his son, later emperor Zhenzong of Tang 唐肅宗(711-762), were placed at the side of the statue of Laozi as attendants, see *Da Tang jiaosi lu* appended in Xiao Song, *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*, 788. Though the Wanshou Dian (Hall of Longevity) in the Jingling Gong was built for emperor Zhenzong of Song when he was still alive, the portrait of emperor Zhenzong was put into it only after his death in 1024 (Tiansheng 2) by his son (Emperor Renzong). See Tuotuo, *Song Shi*, 9:179.

林甫 (?-753) and Chen Xilie 陳希烈 (?-758) were placed in the shrine in 746 (Tianbao 5).⁵⁴ The placing of statues of those still living in the Taiqing Gong indicates its nature as an imperial temple rather than an ancestral shrine.⁵⁵ Moreover though the sacrificial offering to the Taiqing Gong was counted as one of the grand sacrifices the rituals performed there mainly followed Taoist routines.

An important common feature shared by the Taiqing Gong of the Tang dynasty and the Jingling Gong of the Song dynasty was their use in the sacrificial offering to Heaven. In the Song, the Jingling Gong was notified two days before the suburban sacrifice (the sacrificial offering to Heaven) and on the following day the sacrifice at the Tai Miao was carried out. This arrangement was in accordance with the late Tang precedent where the visit to Taiqing Gong was followed by the visit to the Tai Miao for the suburban sacrifice. The Song dynasty scholar Shen Kuo 沈括 (1031-1095) commented that without the Tang precedent the order of the sacrifice should be either at the Tai Miao first, and then at the Jingling Gong and finally to the Heaven or vice versa, as the Jingling Gong was considered to be superior to the Tai Miao.⁵⁶ The observation of Yang Shi 楊時 (1053-1135) suggests that the sacrificial offering at the Jingling Gong was more frequently and meticulously carried out than that to the Tai Miao.⁵⁷ On one hand the religious infusion was objected to by some Confucian scholars such as Ye Shaoweng 葉紹翁 (late 11th – 12th century). On the other hand it

⁵⁴ Liu Xu, *Jiu Tangshu*, 9:220.

⁵⁵ The statues of living people in the temples are also suggested to be a result of Buddhist influence. See Liu Changdong, "Songdai Shenyudian Kao," 387–389.

⁵⁶ Shen Kuo, *Mengxi Bitan*, 1:2–4.

⁵⁷ Yang Shi, *Guishanji*, 12:226.

appears to have enhanced the authority of the Jingling Gong as an imperial ancestral shrine.⁵⁸

The varied use of the multiple imperial shrines in the Tang and Song is at least partially due to the multiple functions associated with the idea behind the imperial ancestral shrine(s). The imperial shrine was certainly the place to express and cultivate filial piety which could strengthen the binds between the family members. Yet it also acted as a political symbol for the state.⁵⁹ The power of the emperors was normally legitimated by two means, the Mandate of Heaven and the legacy of the ancestors. The understanding of the relationship between the two means was not uniform in the history of the pre-Ming dynasties. In fact it was not until the reign of emperor Cheng of the Han (51-7BC, r. 33-7BC) that Heaven joined the group of objects of worship with its spiritual leadership “affirmed by the specific connection of Heaven’s Mandate with the Han Empire”.⁶⁰ Before the emperor Cheng the highest deities established by the Han dynasty were the *wudi* (五帝 five lords) and *taiyi* (太一 great one) instead of Heaven. During the Western Han a visit to the shrine of the dynastic founder Gaozu was a conventional part of the coronation ceremony for emperors. It was even one of the reasons given by Huo Guang 霍光 for removing Liu He 劉賀 (92-59 BC) as emperor only days after he had ascended throne, on the ground that he had not yet

⁵⁸ Ye expressed his objection explicitly in Ye Shaoweng, “Jingling Xingxiang,” 106. There are more implicitly expressed objections from scholars see Wang Shengduo, *Songdai Zhengjiao Guanxi Yanjiu*, 612–613.

⁵⁹ Gao Mingshi, “Lifa Yiyixia de Zongmiao - Yi Zhongguo Zhonggu Weizhu,” 54–55.

⁶⁰ Michael Loewe, “‘Confucian’ Values and Practices in Han China,” 10. The *wudi* are *bai* 白 (white), *qing* 青 (blue), *huang* 黄 (yellow), *chi* 赤 (red), *hei* 黑 (black) lords, which are different from the idea of the *di* in the Shang period. The belief in *wudi* and *taiyi* was influenced by yin-yang theory. More details about this change in Wang Baizhong, “Liang Han Guojia Jisi Zhidu Yanjiu,” 31–41. The term “*shangdi*” was also used in the Han dynasty, but it either refers to *taiyi* and *wudi* or just to *taiyi*. For a detailed analysis on this see *Ibid.*, 92.

visited the shrine of Gaozu.⁶¹ After the reign of emperor Cheng the concept of the “Mandate of Heaven” was consolidated by the advocate of an “antique system” by Wang Mang (45 BC -23, r.8-23) who later exploited the “mandate” as a justification for his own usurping of the throne.⁶² The tradition of the prayer to Heaven (*gaotian* 告天) during enthronement was only initiated by the founder of the Eastern Han (Liu Xiu 劉秀 6BC-57, r. 25-57).⁶³ In the Eastern Han the visit to Gaozu’s shrine was omitted by Liu Xiu and his two subsequent successors in their enthronements only to be resumed when the visit to Liu Xiu’s own shrine was also added to the later emperors’ enthronements.⁶⁴

The Mandate of Heaven, as a legacy of Wang Mang, provided another means for the later emperors to legitimate their authority. While the majority of Eastern Han emperors combined this means with the idea of the dynasty as an inheritance from their ancestors, in the post-Han periods when power was passed on between different imperial families, the direct link with heaven was better appreciated. For example when the last Han emperor (Liu Xie 劉協 181-234, r. 189-220) abdicated and Cao Pi 曹丕 (187-226, r. 220-226) took over the throne, sacrificial fire to Heaven marked the completion of the ceremony.⁶⁵ This setting was adapted by all of the Southern

⁶¹ In the biography of Huo Guang in Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 68: 2945. For more details on the enthronement in the Western Han see Chen Shuguo, *Zhongguo Lizhi Shi: Qin Han Juan*, 98–107.

⁶² Wang Mang’s government issued forty-two *fuming* 符命 (mandate revealed by omens) to justify his usurpation, Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 69: 4112.

⁶³ Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 30: 3157.

⁶⁴ The first recorded emperor who visited the shrines of Gaozu and Guangwu (Liu Xiu) was the fourth emperor of the Eastern Han (Liu Zhao 劉肇 79-106) Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 4: 167. For more details on coronations in the Eastern Han see Chen Shuguo, *Zhongguo Lizhi Shi: Qin Han Juan*, 310–311.

⁶⁵ Yao Cha and Yao Silian, *Chenshu*, 16:419.

dynasties (420-579) and some of the Northern dynasties (386-581) in ceremonies for claiming their thrones from previous governments.⁶⁶ In contrast the visit to the ancestral shrine was no longer important for enthronements even for those emperors who inherited the throne. According to the suggestions by Xu Xiao 徐孝嗣 (453-499) the visit to the shrine was considered only necessary in cases where a person other than the primary son of the former emperor ascended the throne.⁶⁷

However the emperors retained the close association between their ancestral heritage and power as Wang Mang further formalized the sacrificial offering to Heaven being joined with and supported by those to the tablets of ancestors' spirits,⁶⁸ which became a convention in later periods.⁶⁹ Furthermore from the Wei dynasty a system gradually developed in accordance to the ritual classics where the scale of one's ancestral shrine depended on his political rank.⁷⁰ In the Tang dynasty a scale for

⁶⁶ Southern dynasties Song, Qi, Liang and Chen in Li Yanshou, *Nanshi*, 1:23, 4:109, 6:183, 9:271. Northern Qi in Li Yanshou, *Beishi*, 12:245.

⁶⁷ Xiao Zixian, *Nanqi Shu*, 9:136.

⁶⁸ This was formulated in the reign of emperor Ping (9BC-6) in Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 25: 1264–1266. There was precedence in the early Han dynasty that the sacrifice to the highest deities (i.e. *taiyi* and *wudi* at the time) was joined by sacrifice to the tablet of Gaozu, however this was not a convention until Wang Mang took power. Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 51: 1243.

⁶⁹ There were variations of the ceremony which ancestor (ancestors) were involved in, for the development in Northern and Southern dynasties see Liang Mancang, *Wei Jin Nanbeichao Wuli Zhidu Kao Lun*, 178–191. However generally speaking it was a convention for the ancestors' tablets to join the sacrifice to the Heaven lasting into the Qing dynasty. Zhao Erxun, *Qingshi Gao*, 83:2507–2510.

⁷⁰ The ritual classics defined seven ancestors to be sacrificed for by the son of heaven, five for dukes, four for senior officials etc. See *Liji Zhushu*, 23:451. In the Han dynasty this was not fully adapted and it was only in the post Han dynasty that a system in which the political ranks were translated into the equivalents of the titles in the ritual classics as a guideline for the scale of ancestral temple emerged. Gan Huaizhen, *Tangdai Jiamiao Lizhi Yanjiu*, 9–33.

the sacrificial offering to the shrine was also developed and thus the system was utilized to enforce the political order of society.⁷¹

Besides its relation to the power, the imperial ancestral shrine, like all other ancestral shrines, was always an essential part of family rituals. For example during Tang dynasty the capping ceremony for the heir apparent was similar to that for the son of ranked official which commenced with the announcement at the ancestral shrine.⁷² Thus the imperial ancestral shrine remained dual functional in the Tang: it was a political symbol for the whole state as well as a place for the imperial family to worship their own ancestors. From the Tang to the Song dynasty there was a tendency to recover the notion of the family shrine of the Tai Miao as the bureaucracy responsible for the Tai Miao was changed from the Taichangsi 太常(Court of Imperial Sacrifices) to the Zongzhengsi 宗正寺(Court of Imperial Clan) in mid Tang (Kaiyuan 25, 737). In the Song dynasty the personnel carrying out the sacrificial offering to the Tai Miao were exclusively imperial clansman from the reign of Shenzong.⁷³

From the Tang to the Song there was an increasing awareness of the dual functions and accordingly a gradually differentiation in their ritual functions emerged. That the Jingling Gong was the shrine used in the marriage rituals for all imperial family members possibly suggests its nature was closer to that of a family shrine in the *Zhenghe Li*. However the Jingling Gong and the Tai Miao were both symbols of authority reflected by their usages in the suburban sacrifice. In other words, despite of

⁷¹ Gan Huaizhen, *Tangdai Jiamiao Lizhi Yanjiu*, 133–136.

⁷² Xiao Song, *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*, 110:511–512[1b–3b]; 117:556[1a–b].

⁷³ Du You, *Tongdian*, 25: 705. Zheng Juzhong, *Zhenghe Wuli Xinyi*, 5:149[2a–3a]. For more discussion on the family-factors in the Tang and Song Tai Miao see Zhu Yi, “Tang Zhi Beisong Shiqi Tai Miao Jisi Zhong Sijia Yinsu de Chengzhang.”

an increased awareness of their dual functions, the two imperial shrines in the Song were not distinguished clearly as family or state shrines.⁷⁴

SIGNS OF INNER/OUTER COURT DISTINCTION: TAI MIAO AND FENGXIAN DIAN IN THE HONGWU REIGN

The Tai Miao of the Hongwu emperor was first built one year before the founding of the Ming (Zhizheng 27, 1367). The Fengxian Dian began as the place for offering daily sacrifice to the imperial ancestors. The emperor enquired of his Minister of Rites Tao Kai 陶凱 (1304-1376) as to what practice he should adopt. Tao in turn replied:

In the Song dynasty the Great Shrine (Tai Miao) received five seasonal sacrifices per year. The palace had its own [places such as] the Pavilion of Serving Forbears and Heavenly Emblems (Fengxian Tianzhang Ge) and the Hall of Admiring the Ancestors and Filial Longing (Qinxian Xiaosi Dian) to hold the imperial portraits. The son of heaven burnt incense there every day; [and] on seasonal festivals, the first and the fifteenth day of a lunar month, the birthday of the [previous] emperors and empresses, offerings were all made with normal

⁷⁴ The imperial ancestral shrines in Yuan Dynasty brought in many Mongolian customs. Apart from the Tai Miao there were halls of portraits and Shaofan Yuan 燒飯院 (Courtyard of Cooking) for the sacrificial offering to the imperial ancestors. The halls of imperial portraits were regarded as a legacy of the Tang and Song dynasties while the Shaofan Yuan originated from Mongolian customs. However the Yuan Hall of Imperial Portraits had a broad religious background of influences received from Daoism, Tibetan Buddhism and Nestorianism. Moreover they were under the supervision of different governmental bodies and were representative of different branches of the imperial clan. (Xu Zhenghong, “Yuan Taixi Zongyin Yuan Guanshu Jianzhi Kaolun,” 445, 451. The suburban sacrifice imitating Chinese tradition in the Yuan only used the Tai Miao. See Song Lian, *Yuanshi*, 73: 1805. Also Ma Xiaolin, “Yuandai Guojia Jisi Yanjiu.”) The aristocracy of the Yuan adopted their own marriage customs. The chapter will not deal too much with the Yuan development since the main concern of the chapter is the development in the imperial ancestral shrines that was relevant to the changes in the sacrificial offering in the marriage rituals for imperial princes.

food and etiquette between family members... From the Han dynasty onwards the [imperial ancestral] shrine had been placed outside the walls of the palace for a long time, therefore the Song [emperors] built the Hall of Admiring the Ancestors and Filial Longing to the east of the [Hall] of Revering Governance (Chongzheng [Dian]) in the palace to hold the imperial portraits. Now the sacrificial offering in the Great Shrine has become a fixed institution. Please construct another hall of serving forbears to the left of the Palace of Heavenly Purity (Qianqing Gong) to hold the imperial portrait. Incense should be burnt every day, on seasonal festivals, the first and the fifteenth day of a lunar month and the birthday of the [previous] emperors and empresses, offering should [also be] made in this [hall], with normal food and etiquette between family members.

宋太廟一歲五享。宮中自有奉先天章閣、欽先孝思殿奉神御畫像。天子日焚香，時節、朔望、帝后生辰皆徧祭，用常饌，行家人禮。……自漢以來廟在宮城外已非一日。故宋建欽先孝思殿于宮中崇政之東以奉神御。今太廟祭祀已有定制，請於乾清宮左別建奉先殿以奉神御。每日

焚香，朔望薦新，節序及生辰皆于此祭祀，用常饌行家
人禮。⁷⁵

The Fengxian Dian built in Hongwu 3 (1370) was then referred to as the “Nei Tai Miao” 內太廟 (Inner Great Shrine).⁷⁶ A widely accepted explanation of the relationship between the Tai Miao and Fengxian Dian is:

The state and the family have got the Great Shrine to signify
the outer court, [and] the Hall of Serving Forebears to
symbolise the inner court.

國家有太廟，以象外朝；有奉先殿，以象內朝。⁷⁷

Obviously in the Ming dynasty a division of outer and inner court was unprecedentedly perceived through the symbolic roles of the two imperial ancestral shrines. However, it is noteworthy that in Tao Kai's original proposal the Fengxian Dian was an imitation of the Song halls of imperial portraits inside the palace. These halls in the Song palaces had never been involved in formal rituals. In contrast the Fengxian Dian was used in the practice of marriage rituals for imperial prince in Hongwu 8 (1375) which was then rendered into the prescriptions in Hongwu 26 (1393). If the marriage rituals can be categorised into inner (family) rituals, the suburban sacrifice (the sacrificial offering to Heaven) in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions certainly

⁷⁵ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 59:1360. This translation has consulted the translation in Wang Cheng-hua, “Material Culture and Emperorhip: The Shaping of Imperial Roles at the Court of Xuanzong (r.1426-35),” 82–83.

⁷⁶ Liu Ruoyu, *Zhuozhongzhi*, 152.

⁷⁷ Sun Chengze, *Chun Ming Mingyu Lu*, 18:261. Similar statement can also be found in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 52:1331.

expanded the dimension of the Fengxian Dian: two days before the suburban sacrifice the joining with the imperial ancestor (that is, the father of Zhu Yuanzhang, Renzu 1283-1344) was prescribed as to be performed in the Fengxian Dian, whereas there would be no visit to the Tai Miao.⁷⁸

As for the marriage rituals and the suburban sacrifices, the use of the Fengxian Dian appear to have followed the precedent of the Yuan Miao of the Song dynasty, by using the Jingling Gong that was outside the palace. Yet the family notion was emphasised by the etiquette between family members in the Fengxian Dian in comparison to the religious rituals performed in the Jingling Gong. Besides, the sole use of the Fengxian Dian in the suburban sacrifice raised a question regarding the actual concepts of “inner” and “outer” court. The following section will inspect closely the Hongwu emperor’s use of the Tai Miao and Fengxian Dian to shed some light on the possible answer.

After the erection of the Fengxian Dian in Hongwu 3, the emperor ordered that it should be enlarged and the work was completed in the fourth moon of Hongwu 8.⁷⁹ From this point the Fengxian Dian deviated from a mere portrait hall and began to function in the rituals as an imperial shrine. The first appearance of the Fengxian Dian in the records of rituals is in the marriage ritual of the Prince of Qin in Hongwu 8. This use of the Fengxian Dian in the practice of marriage ritual is an embryonic form of the Hongwu 26 prescriptions.⁸⁰ By contrast, the use of the Tai Miao as prescribed in the Hongwu 1 (1368) and 3 (1370) prescriptions was still followed in the

⁷⁸ Zhai Shan, *Zhusi Zhizhang*, 294.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 99:1679.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 102:1719.

marriage ritual of Heir Apparent Zhu Biao 朱標 (1355-1392) in Hongwu 4 (1371) although the Fengxian Dian was already erected.⁸¹ Hence the marriage ritual of the Prince of Qin initialised an update in the choice of the imperial ancestral shrines in the marriage rituals for imperial family members. After the enlargement of the Fengxian Dian it was chosen as the imperial ancestral shrine for marriage rituals of imperial family members. This choice was maintained after the relocation of the capital and palace to Beijing and lasted to the end of the dynasty for all the imperial family members.⁸²

Apparently the emperor was still not satisfied with the enlarged Fengxian Dian; soon afterwards the Fengxian Dian was reconstructed along with the Tai Miao.⁸³ The reconstruction of the Fengxian Dian, completed in the sixth moon of Hongwu 9 (1376), was recorded with the following remark:

Originally the emperor had considered the Hall of Serving
Forbears as not suitable, [and] decreed to reconstruct it, only
then [the task] has [been] concluded.

初上以奉先殿弗稱，命更造之，至是始成。⁸⁴

One year after the reconstruction of the Fengxian Dian (Hongwu 10, 1377) substantial revisions were applied to the suburban sacrifice. First, Heaven and Earth,

⁸¹ Ibid., 1221–1222.

⁸² According to the prescriptions recorded in the Wanli Reign (1573-1620) in Shen Shixing, [*Wanli Da Ming Huidian*, *juan* 67–70.

⁸³ The rebuilding of the Fengxian Dian was completed in the sixth month of the ninth year in Ibid., 106:1773. Tai Miao in the tenth month in Ibid., 110:1820–1821.

⁸⁴ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 106:1773.

to which sacrifices had been separately offered, were set as joint objects of worship in the suburban sacrifice.⁸⁵ In modern research the combination of the sacrificial offering to Heaven and Earth in the Hongwu Reign is understood as an effort to simplify ritual performance to avoid the distractions and wastes caused by complicated procedures.⁸⁶ Discussions of this matter is also found in the context of the research on the re-separation of the sacrificial offering to Heaven and Earth later in the Jiajing Reign (1522-1566).⁸⁷

The second change that has largely been neglected in modern research is the use of the Fengxian Dian as the imperial ancestral shrine to be notified before the suburban sacrifice.⁸⁸ Records from the early Hongwu Reign demonstrate how prudent the emperor was regarding the association of imperial ancestor(s) in the sacrificial offering to Heaven and Earth: in Hongwu 1 he refused to have his ancestors be included in the suburban sacrifice. The emperor prayed in the Tai Miao, explaining:

In previous dynasties all those who owned All Under Heaven
[served their] ancestors in association with [the grand

⁸⁵ The separation and the joint of the sacrifice subject was not a unique case of the Hongwu reign. From the Northern and Southern dynasties (420-589) to the Song dynasty the debates was carried out on the performance of sacrifice offering to Heaven and Earth. The separation or combination of the sacrifices varied from period to period in the accordance to different interpretations of the classics, the financial consideration and as outcomes of political conflicts. There were debates on who/what Heaven and Earth should be and how many different sacrifices should be offered to Heaven and Earth, in the Hongwu case the sacrifice to Heaven and Earth were Haotian shangdi 昊天上帝 (Heavenly Superior Emperor) and Huangdi 皇地 (Imperial Earth) as the two highest deities. For more details on the debates in the pre-Ming period see Zhu Yi, “Cong Jiaoqiuzhizheng Dao Tiandifenhe Zhizheng - Tang Zhi Bei Song Shiqi Jiaosi Zhushenwei de Bianhua.”

⁸⁶ For example Zhao Kesheng, “Hongwu Shinian Qianhou de Jili Gaizhi Chutan: Yi Jiao/miao/shejili Wei Zhongxin,” 54–57.

⁸⁷ For example see You Shujun, *Mingfen Lizhi Yu Huangwei Chongsu: Daliyi Yu Jiajing Zhengzhi Wenhua*, 183–203.

⁸⁸ A record of the prescriptions for suburban sacrifice made in 1377 (Hongwu 10) can be found in Shen Shixing, *[Wanli] Da Ming Huidian*, 81: 1269–1275.

sacrificial offering] to Heaven, the reason why I alone do not dare to do that, is because there are [still parts of] my project and enterprise [for the dynasty] [that] have not been accomplished, there were inattentions in [my] governing [...] therefore I do not yet dare to serve [my ancestors] in association with [the grand sacrificial offering to Heaven].

歷代有天下者,皆以祖配天,臣獨不敢者,以臣功業有未就,政治有關失……故不敢輒奉以配。⁸⁹

The emperor rejected the proposal of associating his ancestors with the sacrificial offering to the Earth in the summer of Hongwu 2 (1369) and explicitly stated that it would only be considered after the conquest of Qingyang 慶陽 (in modern Gansu, which belonged to prefect of Shaanxi in the Yuan and Ming dynasties). Several months later the emperor eventually agreed to serve his father's tablet in the sacrificial offering to Heaven as "the territory has already been broadened, the lives of the commoners [have] started to be soothed" by the victories over the prefects of Shaanxi and Shanxi.⁹⁰ The emperor considered the association of the imperial ancestors with the sacrificial offering to Heaven highly relevant to political stability. Therefore the association of the Fengxian Dian with the suburban sacrifice is very likely to have had its own political implication.

⁸⁹ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 75:1250–1251.

⁹⁰ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 47:930: 今疆宇既廣, 民生稍安. On the association of the imperial ancestors see also Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 48:1251. On the geographical information of Qingyang see Song Lian, *Yuanshi*, 60:1430. Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 42:1003. The Ming conquest of Shanxi and Shaanxi in 1369 "made the position of the refugee Yuan court ... more vulnerable" and lead to a series of Ming victories against the Yuan Court in 1370 when the Yuan emperor fled to Outer Mongolia. Dreyer, "Military Origins of Ming China," 99–100.

As a third change to the suburban sacrifice, the Hongwu emperor erected a covered building - the Dasi Dian 大祀殿 (the Hall of Grand Sacrifice). Though this has normally been interpreted as a solution to the problem of encountering bad weather on the day of the sacrifice,⁹¹ the conversion of open altars to a closed hall increased the exclusiveness of this event. Moreover the Hongwu emperor imposed a new regulation that the suburban sacrifice ought to be performed by the emperor in person unless there were significant state affairs to attend to. This was in contrast with the Tang and Song dynasty when it had been a normal and sometimes regular practice to appoint officials to represent the emperor in suburban sacrifices.⁹² All these indicate a distinctive position for Heaven and Earth in the ideology of the Hongwu emperor when compared to the emperors of previous dynasties.

As a son of a desperately poor tenant peasant family, the Hongwu emperor never denied his humble roots. His background as a commoner was acknowledged in his own decree when ascending to the throne followed by mention of his appreciation of the favour of Heaven as well as the protection of his ancestors.⁹³ He found the opening word in the Yuan imperial decrees “[from the one who was] appointed and favoured by Heaven” (上天眷命) insufficient to express his sincerity to Heaven and

⁹¹ This concern was raised several times by the Hongwu emperor, e.g. in Zhu Yuanzhang, “Dasiwen Bing Gejizhang,” 177.

⁹² In the Tang dynasty officials above rank 3 could represent the emperor in the suburban sacrifice, Liu Xu, *Jiu Tangshu*, 21:819. For detailed discussion of this in the Tang see Kaneko, *Chūgoku Kodai Kōtei Saishi No Kenkyū*, 99–138. In the Song dynasty according to a decree issued by emperor Zhezong 哲宗 (1077–1100) that it had been a convention that the suburban sacrifice was carried out by the relevant offices and the emperor only completed it in person once every three years. Tuotuo, *Song Shi*, 100:2455. The debates in the Song dynasty focused on whether the sacrifice to Heaven and Earth should be separated or not. In the history of the Northern Song there were only four occasions when the emperor offered sacrifice to the Imperial Earth. There were no clear regulations on this found for the Southern Song. For a detailed discussion on this see Zhu Yi, “Cong Jiaoqiuzhizheng Dao Tiandifenhe Zhizheng - Tang Zhi Bei Song Shiqi Jiaosi Zhushenwei de Bianhua.”

⁹³ Zhu Yuanzhang, “Jiwei Zhao,” 37.

changed it to the “[from the one who] serves Heaven and excises the operation [of the state]” (奉天承運).⁹⁴ However the responsibility of serving Heaven and operating the state was not laid solely upon his own shoulders. The emperor’s vision can be seen from an early instruction to his Confucian tutors:

All my sons will take the responsibility for the state under Heaven, the descendants of the meritorious officials will be entrusted with jobs and duties.

朕諸子將有天下國家之責，功臣子弟將有職任之寄。⁹⁵

In other words, the emperor’s sons as a whole group would own the country whereas the officials would only carry out their duties.⁹⁶ The significant role of the imperial princes in serving Heaven is conveyed in a more lucid style in the emperor’s preface to the *Jifeilu* 記非錄 (Collection of Records of the Mistakes), a work recording the misbehaviours of several of the oldest imperial princes and circulated among the other imperial princes:

Among [the descendants of those who were] granted lands in the ancient times a very small number survived in the Zhou dynasty. What was the reason for the small number of survivors? It is because that [they] disobeyed the will of Heaven [and] discarded the order from [their] ruler, [they] had

⁹⁴ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 29: 483.

⁹⁵ Zhu Yuanzhang, “Zun Rushu,” 444.

⁹⁶ The emperor also said to his oldest two sons that “You will all own the state in other days (future)” (汝他日皆有國家) in Zhu Yuanzhang, “Jiao Taizi Zhuwang,” 450.

no idea at all about the way of serving Heaven and [about] devotion to the people [...] People [represent] the order of Heaven. For those who are virtuous Heaven [would] reward them [and] the people [would] follow them; for those who are not virtuous Heaven [would] dismiss them [and] the people [would] leave them. Now [Princes] Zhou, Qi, Tan and Lu humiliated both the soldiers and the people that had been assigned to them, will Heaven remove [our privileges and power] and stop rewarding [us]? In this case [I am] afraid that your sons will get the family and the state into trouble in the future, therefore this work is sent to you, in the hope that [you will] read and familiarised [yourselves] with it to rectify the previous mistakes, and regain Heaven's will (favour), [and] perhaps [the disastrous consequences] could be avoided.

（曩古之列土者）至周存者甚寡。所以存者寡為何？為上乖天意阻君命，為奉天勤民之道茫然無知……民天命也，有德者天與之，民從之；無德者天去之，民離之。今周、齊、潭、魯將所封軍民一概凌辱，天將取而不與乎？是子等恐異日有累家邦，為此冊書前去，其暮熟讀以革前非，早回天意，庶幾可免。⁹⁷

⁹⁷ For more details on *Jifeilu* see Chen Xuelin, "Ming Taizu Jifeilu Shuhou: Qin Zhou Qi Tan Lu Dai Jingjiang Zhuwang Zuixing Xulu." The *Jifeilu* is only extant in manuscript and the current preface was from Ibid., 104.

The emperor educated his sons on “the way of serving Heaven and devotion to the people”. In this sense the emperor shared the responsibility of serving heaven with his lesser sons, the imperial princes. The conduct of the imperial princes would not only influence their own fates, but also have an impact on the entire family and even the state. The people and the state were the rewards from Heaven that were entrusted to all of the sons of the emperor who would then take responsibility to serve Heaven. In other words, the imperial family (consisting of the emperor and all his sons) was the family which served Heaven and ran the state while the rest of the state was all their devices. This postulated a power structure of the imperial family as a core unit and the rest of the state as the periphery – a vision that was held by the Hongwu emperor.

The inner and outer imperial shrines developed as the signs of the emperor’s ideology. The inner shrine Fengxian Dian was used in family rituals such as marriage for imperial family members, but also incorporated in the grand sacrifice to Heaven as well as that to the *sheji* 社稷 ([god of] Soil and [god of] Grain).⁹⁸ On the other hand, the outer shrine Tai Miao apparently concentrated on the relationship between the imperial family and the rest of the state as it continued to host the tablets of those officials who had meritorious service.⁹⁹ Through the differentiation between the inner and outer imperial ancestral shrines in the Hongwu Reign the Hongwu emperor declared the imperial family as an

⁹⁸ Fengxian Dian was incorporated in the sacrifice to the *sheji* at least from the eleventh year of the Hongwu Reign (1380) and was formulated into prescriptions in 1393. See *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 117: 1909.

⁹⁹ Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 52:1339–1340.

enclave of Heaven's servants.¹⁰⁰ Furthermore the notion of the "inner" and the location of Fengxian Dian inside the wall of the palace did not demarcate its power. Instead the inner and outer shrines were signs of a new another type of power structure designed by the emperor; one in which everyone in the state's position depended on his/her distance to the direct service of Heaven whereas the imperial family operated as a core.¹⁰¹

CONNECTING INNER AND OUTER

The marriage rituals of imperial family members conveyed the emperor's idea of "inner" and "outer" and provided the means to connect between them. The marriage ritual of the Prince of Qin with his secondary consort in Hongwu 8 (1375) is the first record of the connection based on the clear definition of inner and outer. In fact the two marriages of the Prince of Qin were closely associated with the shift of the emperor's concerns about the power structure of state in the first and second stages.

¹⁰⁰ An interesting incident is that the appointment of Hongwu emperor's grandson as the new heir apparent in 1392 was reported to the Tai Miao, and there was no mention of the sacrifice to the Fengxian Dian or to Heaven. *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 221: 3233. This indicates the understanding of the appointing of the heir apparent as an "outer" affair however the reason behind it is not clear. Was the Heir Apparent a position which had (more) meaning to the outer world? Or was the appointment of the Heir Apparent an "automatous" task entrusted to the Emperor? The division between "inner" and "outer" state affairs is beyond the scope of this thesis and requires more investigation.

¹⁰¹ A common understanding as "the physical boundary between them (Fengxian Dian and Tai Miao) symbolising the limits of their power" in Wang Cheng-hua, "Material Culture and Emperorship: The Shaping of Imperial Roles at the Court of Xuanzong (r.1426-35),"93. The Fengxian Dian at the time of Xuanzong was a copy in Beijing of the one in Nanjing built in the Hongwu Reign. The policy regarding the power and the privilege of the imperial princes had undergone serious changes from the Reign of the Hongwu to the Xuanzong period. Therefore it is more sensible to avoid the assumption that the Hongwu Fengxian Dian was the same as the Fengxian Dian in later periods. In rituals a downgrade of the Fengxian Dian occurred during the Reign of Jiajing when profound modifications were applied to the state sacrifice, for example the Tai Miao replaced the Fengxian Dian in the suburban sacrifice which possibly implied a downgrade in power happened either earlier or at the same time.

In Hongwu 3 (1370) the Ming restored “Chinese rule up to the Great Wall line for the first time since the early eleventh century” through military victories over the Mongols. The conquest of Sichuan in Hongwu 4 (1371) further allowed the Ming to set their focus beyond the Great Wall. Zhu Yuanzhang made several attempts to appeal to the still powerful KöKö Temür. He arranged the marriage between the younger sister of KöKö and the Prince of Qin. The consort was in the mourning period for her grandfather and the emperor organized a formal discussion to reassure her about the appropriateness of marriage at that time. In her conferment it stated clearly: “[the consort is to] assist our state and family.”¹⁰² In comparison, earlier in the same year “for everlasting family and state” appeared in the conferment to the consort of the heir apparent.¹⁰³ Obviously the first marriage of the Prince of Qin was oriented outsider of the state, towards KöKö. The efforts were all in vain and in the following year the military operation against KöKö also failed. In consequence Zhu Yuanzhang’s ambition for annexing the territories north of the Great Wall ceased.¹⁰⁴

The following marriages of imperial princes switched the objectives back to the inside of the state. There had been, however, a development in the marriage policy associated with the adjustments to the regulations for the principality. The emperor outlined the regulations and institutions for Ming principalities in his work *Zuxunlu* 祖訓錄 (Ancestral Injunctions). During the reign he revised the work several times and the last one was renamed as *Huang Ming Zuxun* 皇明祖

¹⁰² *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 68: 1272: 以助我邦家.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 64: 1221–1222: 用永於家邦.

¹⁰⁴ Dreyer, “Military Origins of Ming China,” 102–106.

訓 (Ancestral Injunctions of August Ming). The first version of this work was promulgated in the fifth moon of Hongwu 6 (1373). The 3rd son of the emperor, the Prince of Jin, married three months later in the same year. The in-law of the Prince of Jin, Xie Cheng, was not ennobled but made the Prince of Jin's mentor and regional military commissioner of Taiyuan (for the province of Shanxi where the Prince of Jin would be dispatched). In Hongwu 9 (1376), the emperor revised the regulations and abolished the offices for the mentors of imperial princes were abolished. Furthermore the military mentors of imperial princes were no longer allowed to hold any posts at provincial level. The three consecutive marriages of the imperial princes with daughters of dukes from the end of Hongwu 8 (1375) to Hongwu 10 (1377) evinced the settlement of the emperor's new marriage policy for imperial princes.¹⁰⁵ The marriages of the imperial princes were adjusted to direct affiliations with military nobles rather than appeasing and appealing to an opponent (as with the first marriage of the Prince of Qin) or securing assistance at the local level (as with the marriage of the Prince of Jin). During the second stage (Hongwu 8-26) the typical routine for an imperial prince was first to be married off to daughter of a military noble and then to be dispatched to a principality.

The Prince of Qin's second marriage was the first implementation of the marriage policy. Thus the corresponding ritual would need to relegate the relevant parties, in particular the imperial prince and his in-laws into their proper positions of the power structure. The ancestral sacrifice in Hongwu 8 embedded the emperor's ideology of the partition of the inner and outer sections in the power

¹⁰⁵ Hongwu 8 the Prince of Qin, Hongwu 9 the Prince of Yan, and Hongwu 10 the Prince of Zhou.

structure. The use of the inner shrine the Fengxian Dian permitted the connection of the imperial prince and his consort crossing over the partition. This permission had to be granted before the union of the couple, so the ancestral sacrifice was scheduled before the first night. The presences of both the imperial prince and his consort further suggested that the permission was not merely for the consort's joining the imperial family but permission of the connection between the couple. In the following step both bride and groom would have an audience with the empress and the emperor which, in all precedents, was originally the consort's meeting with her parents-in-law. The next step which prescribed both of them to visit the consort's family also differed from the similar step of "the son-in-law meeting the parents of the woman (his wife)" in precedent prescriptions such as those in the *Jiali*.¹⁰⁶ Having gained permission for the connection between the couple through the ancestral sacrifice, the couple's integration to the inner section in the power structure was achieved through the audience with the emperor and empress while that to the outer section was achieved through the visit to the consort's family. By lining up the steps for the couple to offer sacrifice to the imperial ancestors, to have an audience with the emperor and the empress, and to visit the consort's family, both a hierarchy of the inner and outer sections as well as their connection by the union of the couple were presented.¹⁰⁷ The visit to the

¹⁰⁶ Zhu Xi, *Jiali*, 3: 900: 婿見婦之父母.

¹⁰⁷ In preparing the marriage ritual for the heir apparent in Hongwu 4, emperor Hongwu personally made several modifications to the prescriptions proposed by the ministry of rites. One of the modifications was for the visit to the Tai Miao that "the heir apparent [should] go together" (皇太子俱往). This possibly suggest a preliminary idea embodied in the ritual that the marriage should be the connection between the two sides rather than the integration of the woman. However the idea of connections between inner and outer sections was more clearly delivered in the Hongwu 8 practice via the use of the Fengxian Dian and the couple's completion of several steps together. Furthermore the couple's performing of a sacrificial offering and meeting the emperor and empress together were not only adopted in the prescriptions for imperial princes, but also in the later prescriptions for the emperor and the heir apparent. Shen Shixing, [*Wanli*] *Da Ming Huidian*, 67–68:1097–1122. In this

consort's family acknowledged its positions at the vicinity of the imperial family in the power structure.

The arrangement of the ancestral sacrifice as in Hongwu 8 was adopted in Hongwu 26 and subsequent prescriptions for imperial princes' marriage rituals. There were already eleven imperial princes stationed at their principalities by Hongwu 25, and an additional four imperial princes that had not yet married were dispatched in Hongwu 26.¹⁰⁸ In the prescriptions published during the year the step for ancestral sacrifice was formally textualised with the term "presentation at the shrine". The choice of the term is likely to utilise the symbolic meaning of the "qualification" of the wife. This symbolic meaning became even more significant when the selections of the consorts shifted to the provincial level from Hongwu 27.¹⁰⁹ The selections of low-status consorts developed into a convention in the reign of the Xuande emperor (1399-1435, r.1462-1435) while "presentation at the shrine" in the prescriptions for marriage rituals for imperial princes remained the same as in Hongwu 26.

The developments in the ancestral sacrifice in the imperial princes' marriage rituals can be compared with that of the princesses. A year after the Prince of Qin's second marriage the Princess of Lin'an got married (Hongwu 9). At the beginning of the ritual there was a step for her to visit the Fengxian Dian

sense the Hongwu 8 practices were a milestone in the development in the marriage rituals for the members of the imperial family.

¹⁰⁸ I.e. the Prince of Liao (1377-1424), the Prince of Ning (1378-1444), the Prince of Qing (1378-1438) and the Prince of Su (1376-1420) were dispatched in the first moon of Hongwu 26. However all but the Prince of Ning were stationed temporarily at nearby places to wait for their principalities to be ready. *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 224:3276.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 231:3376.

after receiving her title.¹¹⁰ This is another innovation of the Hongwu reign as the procedures of conferring titles for princesses did not include a visit to the imperial shrine as prescribed in the *Kaiyuan Li* or the *Zhenghe Li*, nor even in the prior prescriptions from the *Mingjili* (Hongwu 3). On her arrival at the family residence of her husband, the Princess of Lin'an also offered a sacrifice to her husband's ancestors together with her husband. Then the couple visited her parents-in-law. At first glance it seems that this arrangement bore similarity with that of the imperial princess in the time schedule (in the middle of the marriage rituals) and the personnel (the couple, rather than just one party). However the appearance of the imperial shrine Fengxian Dian at the beginning of the ritual suggests that again this was a connection between inner and outer sections in the hierarchy. Furthermore in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions the ancestral sacrifice at the groom's family was still termed "[a] visit to the ancestral hall" (謁祠堂). In other words the ancestral sacrifice at the family of the princess's husband was not given the same symbolic meaning as qualifying the wife (as that in the marriage rituals of the imperial princes). At the end of the marriage ritual of the Princess of Lin'an it was only her husband who had an audience with the emperor and empress as well as with the imperial princes. First of all there wasn't a return by the Princess of Lin'an to her natal family which contrasts with the rituals for the secondary consort of Prince Qin. Secondly the husband of the Princess of Lin'an had to bow four times on his knees to his brothers-in-law (the imperial princes). Thirdly this step was removed in the Hongwu 26/27 (1393/1394) prescriptions whereas both imperial princes and their wives still need to visit their in-laws. All

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 107:1779–1792.

this suggests that connections made to the imperial family (the inner-part of the hierarchy) through princesses were not as significant as those made through imperial princes, in particular the in-laws of princesses were not formally attached to the imperial family as were the in-laws of the imperial princes. During the second stage it was only the husbands of princesses who were integrated within the vicinity of the imperial family. In the third stage with the removal of the step of having an audience with the imperial family such integration was no longer guaranteed (Table III-4). The differentiation between the in-laws of imperial children upon gender as reflected by the arrangement of marriage rituals resonated with their different fates in the purges.

Table III-4 Ancestral sacrifice steps in Hongwu 26

	Imperial Princes	Princesses
Pre-wedding	--	Visiting the shrine (Fengxian Dian)
On the day of wife's arrival	Presentation at the shrine	Visiting the hall of ancestors (of her husband)

CONCLUSION

Innovation suitable to contemporary needs was achieved by mixing selected elements from the classics and precedents in arranging the ancestral sacrifice in the second marriage of the Prince of Qin in Hongwu 8 (1375). Although there have been disputes over the ancestral sacrifice's role in marriage rituals in the classics, the participants and the schedule for the step in Hongwu 8 are more likely to be derived from the Song custom "courtesy to the ancestors' spirits" that appeared in the precedent *Shuyi*. The imperial shrine Fengxian Dian appears to have been developed from the Song precedent Jingling Gong, yet it took the unprecedented step of imposing a clear definition of the power structure based on the partition of the inner and outer sections

of the state hierarchy. The sense of differentiation and the connection between the inner and outer sections were simultaneously conveyed by the presences of the imperial prince and the consort in the Fengxian Dian immediately after the consort's arrival at the palace in the Hongwu 8 practice. From the Hongwu 26 (1393) prescriptions onwards, all of the above changes were placed under a term derived from the ritual classic, "the presentation at the shrine", which brought in a further symbolic meaning of "qualification" of the wife.

The Hongwu emperor conceived the idea of inner and outer sections in the hierarchy in the early Hongwu reign and his idea evolved over time. It gradually took shape in rituals with the adaptations of the Fengxian Dian in the second marriage of the Prince of Qin in Hongwu 8, the sacrifice to Heaven and Earth in Hongwu 10 (1377) and the sacrifice to the Soil and Grain in Hongwu 11 (1378). The updates in rituals were all applied before the emperor's despatching of the first group of imperial princes to their principalities. These updates were likely a form of ideological preparation for the grafting of the imperial princes onto their places in the existing power structure. In Hongwu 26 the imperial princes were already a powerful group. Hence, the step of sacrificial offering was associated with the sense of qualification through the term "presentation to the shrine". Later, the power of the imperial princes were formally abolished in the Xuande reign (1426-1435). Nevertheless the notions of inner and outer sections in the hierarchy was adopted as "private" versus "public". In the Jiajing reign (1507-1567) the status of the Tai Miao instead of the Fengxian Dian for use in the sacrificial offering to Heaven was restored. The Fengxian Dian continued to serve as an inner "private" temple in the family rituals such as marriage. Although the power structure had been re-arranged, the notions and shrines of inner and outer sections with

modified meanings and applications lasted to the Qing dynasty as a legacy of the Hongwu reign.

The present investigation of the ancestral sacrifice also provides us an insight into the different characteristics of ritual practices and prescriptions. The target audience of the ritual practice was the participants, therefore half of the steps were from customs in the ritual for marrying the Prince of Qin and the daughter of the military duke Deng Yu in Hongwu 8. An alternative arrangement is found in the ritual for marrying the Princess of Li'an and the civil duke Li Shanchang 李善長 (1314-1390) where none of the steps were from customs.¹¹¹ On the other hand the prescriptions had their potential readerships more widely beyond the physical and temporal scope of practices. After their studies of precedents both the Hongwu emperor and his compilers were likely to have been well aware of the greatly broadened audience once the rituals were rendered into prescriptions. As a result although the later prescriptions adopted the steps from the Hongwu 8 practice, a number of steps were also recovered from the classics and the prescriptions. Similarly the employment of the term “presentation at the shrine” was at least not only for the in-laws to-be of the imperial princes who were likely military officials or commoners, but also for the readers that were expected to possess knowledge of precedents and classics. Hence the decision over an update to a ritual to be imposed in the practice, in the prescriptions or both would have depended on whether the intended audiences were the participants, the readers, or both.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 107: 1779–1785.

In Hongwu 8, the emperor introduced important innovations to the practice of the marriage ritual of the Prince of Qin without incorporating them into prescriptions. Therefore at the second stage he was mainly concerned with the participants of the marriage rituals. His priority was to sort out the relationships between the imperial princes who were going to take residence in principalities and their ennobled in-laws. The emperor had a clear mind as to the fine set of the nobles whom he would select as in-laws for his sons and the marriage rituals were tailored for the affiliations. However the death of his oldest son in Hongwu 25 forced him to alter the marriage policy for the imperial princes again and update the marriage rituals accordingly.

Table III-5 Development in the marriage rituals for imperial princes during the Hongwu reign (1368-1398)

<i>Mingjili</i> Hongwu 3	The Prince of Qin's Second Marriage Hongwu 8	<i>Zhusi Zhizhang</i> Hongwu 26	<i>Da Ming Huidian</i> Hongwu 27
Submission of the choice			
Asking the name			
Submission of the auspicious results			
Submission of the completion (proof)	Submission of the proof	Submission of proof	submission of the proof, dispatching the <i>ce</i> and expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery] Acceptance of the engagement by the consort's family
		performing the rite of the submission of the proof at the consort's family	
Request of the date			
		Issuing the conferment and appointing the messengers	
Dispatching of the messengers to deliver the conferment		Arrival of conferment at the consort's Family	
	Expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]		
[Consort] receiving the conferment of the title		[Consort] receiving the conferment of the title	
	Decking the room	Decking the room	
[Emperor's] Warning and toasting		[Emperor's] warning and toasting	
		Toasting and Warning at the consort's Family Residence	

Welcome in person		Welcome in person
	Visiting the Fengxian Dian (Ancestral Sacrifice)	Presentation at the shrine (Ancestral Sacrifice)
Sharing sacrificial meat (Ritualised dinner)		Joining half Gourd (Ritualised dinner)
Consort having an audience with the emperor and the empress	[Imperial prince and his consort's having an audience with the emperor and the empress]	[Imperial prince and his Consort's] audience with the empress and the empress
[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner		[Wife's] helping her parents-in-law to wash their hands and faces and have dinner
		Visit of imperial Prince and his consort to the eastern palace (heir apparent)
	First visit to the consort's family	First visit to the consort's family
Visiting the shrine (Ancestral Sacrifice)		

Chapter IV.

Conferment: Stage Three (Hongwu 26-31)

In the third stage the prescriptions of marriage rituals for imperial princes were first revised in the first moon of Hongwu 26. By this time the emperor had already married off eleven imperial princes, the last of whom was the Prince of Dai (Zhu Gui 朱桂 1374-1446) who was married to the second daughter of the deceased King of Zhongshan, Xu Da 徐達 (1332-1385), in Hongwu 24 (1391).¹ Over three years later, the emperor married off the next two imperial princes (the Prince of Liao and the Prince of Ning) in the tenth moon of Hongwu 27.² Several months prior to these two marriages, in the seventh moon of the same year, another revision to the prescriptions for the rituals was announced.³ The Hongwu 26 prescriptions were never put into practice as no imperial prince were married in the intervening period and hence no marriage rituals were performed between the two revisions.

¹ The Prince of Dai's marriage see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 212: 3145. The oldest son of Xu Da, Xu Huizu 徐輝祖 (1368-1407) inherited Xu Da's previous title (Duke of State Wei) and took charge of centre chief military commission (中軍都督府) in 1385, see Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 105: 3000. Xu Da had three daughters, all of whom married imperial princes. The oldest married the Prince of Yan (Zhu Di 朱棣 1360-1424, later emperor Yongle, 1402-1424) in Hongwu 9. The youngest married the Prince of An (Zhu Ying 朱楩 1383-1417). According to Wei Lianke, the Prince of An married in 1385 (Hongwu 18). However from *Ming Taizu Shilu* which is claimed as the primary source the marriage of the Prince of An is only mentioned in the summary of Xu Da's life after the record of his death. Wei seemed to have taken the year of Xu Da's death for the Prince of An's marriage. See *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 171:2618. Conf. Wei Lianke, "Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue," 188. Therefore the marriage of the Prince of An isn't included in the eleven marriages here.

² The Prince of Liao (Zhu Zhi 朱植, 1377-1424) married to a daughter of Marquis of Wuding Guo Ying 郭英 (1335-1403) while Prince Ning (Zhu Quan 朱權 1378-1448) married to a daughter of a warden (*bingma zhihui* 兵馬指揮 rank 6a), see *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 235: 3429.

³ *Ibid.*, 233: 3405-3409.

In Hongwu 27 a significant revision was made to the first step of the prescribed marriage ritual. This was the merging of the *nazheng* 納徵 (submission of the proof) and the *ce* 冊 (conferring). The *nazheng* featured in the *Yili* 儀禮 (Etiquette and Ceremonials) and was originally a procedure of submitting valuable gifts to the woman's family to secure their approval of the marriage.⁴ The *ce* was originally an edict for the bestowal of the titles of nobility in the *Liji* 禮記 (Record of Rituals).⁵ In all preceding official prescriptions they had always been independent steps with different natures. The *nazheng* belonged to the norm (the six rites) of the marriage ritual prescribed for all social classes.⁶ As for the *ce*, there were separate prescriptions outside the context of marriages but within this context the *ce* was prescribed only for limited classes and women. In both sets of the prescriptions all the steps before the *nazheng* as defined in the *Yili* were unprecedentedly removed. Hence the (also unprecedented) merging of the *ce* and *nazheng* in the Hongwu 27 prescriptions for imperial princes reveals two facts about the two procedures. Firstly, there was still a necessity to maintain both of them. Secondly, for the first time the two procedures were regarded as of similar natures and capable of performing identical functions in these marriage rituals.

⁴ *Yili Zhushu*, 4:42.

⁵ In the variant form “策” which is regarded as interchangeable with 冊 under this meaning in the *Liji Zhushu*, 49:836.

⁶ The six rites are the *nacai* 納采 (submission of the choice), *wenming* 問名 (asking the name), *naji* 納吉 (submission of the auspicious results), the marriage agreement in the *nazheng* 納徵 (submission of the proof) and the *qingqi* 請期 (request of the date [of wedding]) and the picking up of the bride as the *qinying* 親迎 (welcome in person) in *Yili Zhushu*, 2:39. For more details see Chapter 2.

Close inspection of the Hongwu 26 and Hongwu 27 prescriptions shows that the merging involved an additional component other than the *nazheng* and the *ce*. The extra component was the emperor's dispatch of the messengers in the palace as a procedure prescribed under the *nazheng* step in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions. In this set for the first time the main procedure under the *nazheng* switched from the residence of the woman to that of the man. The procedure outlined in the prescriptions starts with the displays of the band and the gifts at the Fengtian Dian 奉天殿 (The Hall of Serving Heaven) where the groups of officials then gather. The emperor ascends the throne and decrees to the two officials who act as his messengers:

Now [I] engage daughter Y of official X as the consort of imperial prince Z. [I] command you to perform the rite of submission of the proof.

今聘某官某女為某王妃。命卿等行納徵禮。⁷

The prescriptions for the *nazheng* stop at the point when the messengers exit the palace with the gifts and lead the procession to the consort's family. It continues in the following step *feijia xing nazheng li* 妃家行納徵禮 (performing the rite of the submission of the proof at the consort's family) with the submissions of the gifts to the consort's family.⁸ In the Hongwu 26 prescriptions the term *nazheng* is altered from its original

⁷ To avoid confusion I translate the character *li* 禮 in the original texts into "rite" when it refers to the procedures in marriage rituals.

⁸ The Wanli edition of *Da Ming Huidian* does not have the second heading and the contents are merged. Both the *Zhusi Zhizhang* and the Zhengde edition of *Da Ming Huidian* (as seen in *Siku Quanshu*) have two separated headings and hence is regarded as the arrangement for Hongwu 26 prescriptions. The notion "step" specifically refers to headings organized under the prescriptions for marriage rituals here.

meaning of submission of gifts to instead refer to the dispatch of the messengers at the palace whereas the actual procedure of gift submission was placed under a conjugated term specifying its location as at the consort's family.

Similar to the *nazheng*, the *ce* in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions also includes the step of dispatching the messengers, followed by the steps of the arrival of the messengers at the consort's family and the consort's acceptance of the conferment. The first line of the prescriptions under the step of *face mingshi* 發冊命使 (issuing the *ce* and appointing the messengers) establishes the correlation with the *nazheng*: the displays of the throne, the band and the gifts are described as “as with [that in] the rite of submission of the proof” (如納徵禮).⁹ The decree of the emperor when dispatching the *ce* is also akin to the that of the *nazheng*:

Now [I] confer daughter Y of official X as the consort of imperial prince Z. [I] command you to hold the pledge to perform the rite.

今冊某官某女為某王妃。命卿等持節行禮。

The dispatch of the messengers, submission of the proof and the conferring of the title were revised in Hongwu 27. The procedures were merged and reorganized into two

Thus it is different from a procedure which can be prescribed in more than one step, or several procedures can be prescribed under one step. Furthermore the headings are neither equivalent to the steps, for example there are headings for gifts in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions.

⁹ The *face mingshi* is one of the headings prescribed for the procedure of the *ce*. There is a differentiation between what I refer to as “heading” and as “procedure”: the later refers to a procedure of the marriage ritual whereas the former regards its representation(s) in the written form as in the prescriptions. Therefore one procedure could be organized as several headings while sometimes one heading could address two or more procedures.

steps of *nazheng face cuizhuang* (納徵發冊催妝 submission of the proof, dispatching the *ce* and expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]) and *feijia shoupin* (妃家受聘 acceptance of the engagement by the consort's family). In the Hongwu 27 prescriptions the decree of emperor to dispatch the messengers reads:

Now [I] engage daughter X of official Y as the consort of imperial prince Z. [I] command you to hold the pledge to perform the rites of the submission of the proof and delivery of the conferment etc.

今聘某官某女為某王妃。命卿等持節行納徵發冊等禮。

In the Hongwu 27 prescriptions the *pin* 聘 (engagement, alternatively enquiry) addresses both the *nazheng* and the *ce*. All the three terms *pin*, *ce* and *nazheng* have classical provenance.

The *nazheng* was the concluding step of the negotiations in “the marriage ritual for ordinary officials” (士昏禮) in the *Yili*. During the marriage negotiations, the messengers who represented the father of the groom requested the leader of a chosen family to make a marriage match for the groom. The purpose of this marriage ritual was thus explained as “to join the goodness of two surnames”.¹⁰ The term *na* means “submission” while “*zheng*” 徵 (proof [for achieving the marriage arrangement]) can be glossed as *cheng* 成 (completion). The steps leading up to the *nazheng* were a series of submissions of gifts to attract and maintain the interest of the bride's family in the

¹⁰ *Liji Zhushu*, 44: 999: 將合二姓之好.

marriage proposal. In the following step *qingqi* 請期 (requesting the date [for picking up the bride]) the term “*na*” does not appear though it is performed similarly to the rite of the *nazheng*.¹¹ The *nazheng* is a step marking a point after which “the bride’s family could not change their mind [about the marriage] anymore, therefore in all [later stages the term] ‘*na*’ is no longer used”.¹² In the classics, the *nazheng* was defined unambiguously as a critical procedure in the marriage rituals. Of the other two terms, in the classics the *pin* was referred to in a broader context including recruiting scholars and sending envoys. The latter definition of the *pin* was arguably comparable to the marriage negotiations whereas the *ce* appears to be irrelevant to marriage rituals in the classics.

The Hongwu 26 prescriptions introduced to the *nazheng* a procedure of dispatching the messengers that can be traced to the ritual of *pin* (enquiry) in the classics. The *ce* in this set was prescribed in a similar way to the *nazheng*. Based on the five headings prescribed in the procedures relevant to the *nazheng* and the *ce* in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions, the Hongwu 27 prescriptions reorganized the overall procedure into two headings and further involved the term *pin*. The Hongwu 27 revision should not be viewed merely as a simplification. Rather it should be recognized that the relevant terms and procedures were deliberately and innovatively rearranged. An inquiry into the rationale behind this innovation requires knowledge of the symbolic meanings of these terms and procedures at that particular time. While the symbolic meaning of the *nazheng* was relatively stable in the classics and precedents, this chapter will first track the

¹¹ *Yili Zhushu*, 4: 42.

¹² “則昏禮已成女家不得移改故皆不言納也” and all the other quoted commentaries for the *nazheng* and *qingqi* in *Ibid.*, 4: 39–41.

evolutions of the procedure of emperor's despatch of the messengers (with reference to *pin*) and *ce* from classics to their usages as precedent in ritual practices and prescriptions and thus ascertain their evolved symbolic meanings. This will lead to a careful examination of the arrangements of the *ce*, *nazheng* and the dispatch of the messengers in the Hongwu 26 and 27 prescriptions. The revision in the two sets of prescriptions will be contextualised and analysed with the almost simultaneous change in the political landscape to reveal how it corresponds to the update to the marriage policy for imperial princes.

THE *PIN* (ENQUIRY) AND THE EMPEROR'S DISPATCH OF MESSENGERS

In the classics *pin* has multiple definitions that exhibit similarities with the marriage rituals. First of all, the *pinli* 聘禮 (ritual for enquiring after) in the *Yili* refers to the ritual for sending greetings between the members of aristocracy. The ritual has two scales: the grand scale of *pin* and small scale of *wen* 問 (asking).¹³ The *pinli*, together with the *chaoli* 朝禮 (ritual for having an audience) which refers to the members of aristocracy paying a visit to each other in person, constitute the *binli* 賓禮 (rituals for guests) in the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Rites of the Zhou).¹⁴ The *binli* system was adapted in the institutionalised

¹³ *Yili Zhushu*, 19–24:226–298. See also Zhang Liang, “Zhoudai Pinli Yanjiu,” 105–168.

¹⁴ Further types of *pinli* are defined in the *Zhouli*, for example from son of heaven to the marquises (諸侯) there are *cun* 存 (sympathize) once a year, *tiao* 覲 (observe) once every three years and *xing* 省 (visit) once every five years etc. *Zhouli Zhushu*, 37:565. *Shipin* 時聘 (seasonal enquire after) and the *yintiao* 殷覲 (observe in group) for the other way round. Ibid., 18:276. Zhang Liang, “Zhoudai Pinli Yanjiu,” 169–190.

rituals from the Han dynasty onwards for diplomatic activities. The *pin* gradually came to refer to the governmental interactions through envoys with other states, especially those not submissive to the Chinese government(s) to obtain or strengthen mutual concordance.¹⁵

It has been suggested that the *pinli* for greeting was derived from the negotiations between marriage parties, especially for marriages among the aristocracy.¹⁶ There is a variant graph for the character *pin*, i.e. 嫔 (enquire) with the particle *nü* 女 (women), which is alleged to be an early graph of the *pin* (enquire after) that later evolved into the graph with the particle *er* 耳 (ear). *Pin* 嫔 is possibly constructed with reference to the negotiation of the marriage that is conducted by the messenger sent by the man's family to the woman's family.¹⁷ Both variants (聘 and 嫔) can be used in these two different situations (i.e. marriage and greeting). The two rituals bear similarities: both of them are interactions between two sides through messengers who deliver gifts and messages. Furthermore the two interacting sides are generally considered equal entities.

¹⁵ The *pin* can refer to the envoys sent or received by the Chinese government. The exchange of envoys is referred to as *jiaopin* 交聘 (crossing enquire after), for example that of Northern Qi (550-577) and Liang (either Nan Liang 502-557 or Hou Liang 555-587) or that of Song (960-1279) and Liao (916-1125) in standard histories. For example: Li Baiyao, *Bei Qishu*, 35:469. Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 165:3903. The *Qingshi gao* 清史稿 which was compiled at the early 20th century also uses *jiaopin* to refer to the diplomatic activities of the Qing government with foreign powers such as European governments. Zhao Erxun, *Qingshi Gao*, 212-213: 8781-8893.

¹⁶ A detailed discussion on the similarities between *pinli* and *hunli* and an account of their historical development can be found in Li Hu, "Lun Pinli Yu Hunli de Yuanyuan Guanxi," 5-35.

¹⁷ See Duan Yucai's commentary in Xu Shen and Duan Yucai, *Shuowen Jiezi Zhu*, 12b:622.

In addition to diplomatic greetings and the negotiation of marriage, there is a third usage of *pin* as the recruitment of talents. For example the *Liji* states:

The Confucian [scholar] has the treasures (knowledge) to be displayed on the mat, with which [he is] waiting to be enquired; [he] studies hard day and night, waiting to be questioned; [he] holds loyalty and honesty to his bosom, waiting to be elected; [he] puts into practices [the principles], waiting to be chosen; his self-establishment is like this (as above).

儒有席上之珍以待聘，夙夜強學以待問，懷忠信以待舉，力行以待取，其自立有如此者。

The *pin* (enquiry), *wen* (asking), *ju* (elect), *qu* (choose) all refer to the processes for the scholar's self-establishment in a governmental career. In the commentary to this passage Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) noted: "a grand questioning is called enquiring" which resonates with the scales in the etiquette for greeting.¹⁸ In historical texts the *pin* as recruitment is often applied to situations in which a ruler or an ambitious official pursues famous scholars.¹⁹

¹⁸*Liji Zhushu*, 59:974: 大問曰聘.

¹⁹ And on several occasions the *pin* failed as the targeted scholar(s) rejected the offered governmental positions. For example Zheng Pu 鄭朴(?) refused the *pin* from the General Wang Feng (?-22BC), See Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 72:3056. Loewe, *A Biographical Dictionary of the Qin, Former Han and Xin Periods* (221BC-AD24), 724.

Although intermediates could be required for all these three usages of the *pin* in the classics, the procedure of appointment and dispatch of the messengers was only detailed in the *pinli* as sending greetings. Yet in subsequent dynasties this procedure was normally omitted in the ritual prescriptions and records of diplomatic activities as the focus becomes set on receiving the foreign envoys and the behaviours of Chinese envoys at a foreign court. However a procedure referred to as “*linxuan qian/ming shi*” 臨軒遣/命使 ([emperor’s] dispatching / appointing of the messengers at the front of the palace hall) was frequently seen in use for various occasions including the marriage rituals for imperial family members in imperial China. This procedure bears significant resemblance to the so-called *nazheng* in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions. Records on the *linxuan qian/ming shi* dating from the Jin (265-420) to the Song (960-1279) show that further layers of symbolic meanings had been attached to the procedure of dispatching of the messengers. These layers together with the definitions in the classic provided the basis for innovation to the procedure in the Hongwu 26 and 27 prescriptions.

The earliest record for the *linxuan qianshi* in the marriage rituals was in the marriage of emperor Cheng of the Jin (321-342, r.325-342). This arrangement was an outcome of studying the *Zuozhuan* 左傳 (Zuo’s Narrative of Spring and Autumn):²⁰

²⁰ The passage of King Ling of Zhou is from Xianggong 12 (襄公十二年, 561 BC) in Yang Bojun, *Chunqiu Zuozhuan Zhu*, 996–997. The Duke of Qi here should refer to Duke Ling of Qi 齊靈公 (?-554 BC), who asked Yan Ying 晏嬰 (Yan Huanzi, 578-500 BC) about the appropriate responses to the King’s enquiry. “Reaching down” (下達) appeared in the marriage ritual for ordinary officials (士婚禮) in the *Yili* referring to the man’s family gaining permission from the woman’s family for the marriage negotiations. However the reaching down is a procedure prior to the marriage ritual in *Yili Zhushu*, 2: 39.

According to the Zuo's narrative [annotated] by Du Yu (222-285), the host(s) for the marriage merely offers valuables [to the woman's family] for the marriage ritual. Also, [when] King Ling of Zhou demanded [a match for] marriage from the Qi, the Duke of Qi asked Yan Huanzi, Huanzi replied:" [our response should be] a certain number of people (ladies) that was given birth by the couple [of Duke of the Qi] (daughters of the Duke Qi). [As for] the aunts and sisters [of the Duke], then say a certain number of ladies [that were] daughters left by the deceased certain Duke". This is because the command of the son of heaven naturally needs to reach down [to his subjects] and the responses from his subject are communicated up to [the emperor]. The previous Confucian scholars regarded this activity that had been recorded in details by Qiuming (556-451BC) as [a] marriage ritual for a ruler. Therefore the emperor Cheng came to the front of the palace hall to dispatch the messengers who took up the mission to install the empress.

據杜預左氏傳說，主婚是供其婚禮之幣而已。又，周靈王求婚於齊，齊侯問於晏桓子，桓子對曰：「夫婦所生若而人，姑姊妹則稱先守某公之遺女若而人。」此則天子之命，

自得下達，臣下之答，徑自上通。先儒以為丘明詳錄其事，蓋為王者婚娶之禮也。故成帝臨軒遣使稱制拜后。²¹

This passage demonstrates how information about the procedures for marriage negotiation between the son of heaven and his subject were carefully juxtaposed for the marriage ritual of the emperor Cheng of Jin. It highlights a need for a mediator (or mediators) in the emperor's marriage to deliver the message and the gifts.²² As a result, the emperor Cheng appointed the defender-in-chief (太保) Zhuge Hui 諸葛恢 (284-345) and the grand guardian (太尉) Kong Yu 孔愉 (268-342) as messengers to deliver the marriage gifts. This application of *linxuan mingshi* served a dual function as a marriage negotiation as well as in installing the empress. Two years later, when the emperor dispatched messengers to grant the titles of the three high dukes: *taifu* 太傅 (grand mentor), *taiwei* 太尉 (defender-in-chief), *sikong* 司空 (minister of works), the procedure was also referred to as *linxuan qianshi* and was designed in accordance with the reception of envoys from vassal states.²³ The employment of messengers was possibly necessary on this occasion, as at least two officials were responsible for garrisoning the prefectures

²¹ Fang Xuanling, *Jinshu*, 21:665.

²² The selections of the hosts for the marriage should have depended on the statuses of the families of the marrying couple. Normally the two families would be of the same status so there would be a natural balance between the hosts of the marriage from the man's family or clan and the family of the woman being matched up. Yet for the son of heaven who could only marry someone of lower status by virtue of his position the host for the marriage would be one of the marquises to maintain the balance in the ritual. Yao Yimin, "Zhoudai 'Zhuhun' Yu 'Meishuo' Lisu Kao," 422–423.

²³ Fang Xuanling, *Jinshu*, 21:660–661.

outside of the capital at the time.²⁴ The record of this *linxuan qianshi* is placed under the rituals for the guests in the *Jinshu* 晉書 (History of the Jin).²⁵

It is likely that the procedure of *linxuan qianshi* had not been formally ritualised until the Jin dynasty (265-420). In fact it is questionable whether for the earlier periods the emperor's *linxuan* (lit. coming to the front of the palace) had been a convention in the ceremony for conferring titles while for sure the employment of the messengers was not.²⁶ The dispatch of messengers also did not appear in the rare records for appointing empresses before the reign, and this was despite the clear involvement of messengers.²⁷ During the reign of the emperor Cheng of Jin the procedure of the emperor's personal dispatch of messengers had been made more elaborate and complicated. But the use and the symbolic meanings of this procedure thereafter was still lacking in uniformity. The “*linxuan qianshi*” was used when the emperor He of Qi 齊和帝 (488-502, r. 501-502) abdicated his throne in favour of the emperor Wu of the Liang 梁武帝 (464-549, r. 502-

²⁴ The Taiwei Xi Jian 郗鑒 (269-399) was responsible to garrison the Jingkou 京口 (modern Jiangsu) and the Sikong Yu Liang 庾亮 (289-340) was at Wuchang 武昌. See the biographies of Xi Jian and Yu Liang in *Ibid.*, 67:1796–1802; 73:1915–1924.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 21:660–661.

²⁶ The *linxuan* was not mentioned in the ceremonies reported by Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 3120–3121. Yet the *Songshu* suggests that the Han had the convention of the *linxuan* in Shen Yue, *Songshu*, 14: 341–342. I am inclined to the former account because there was no appearance of the term *linxuan* in the *Hanshu* 漢書 (History of the Han) the compiler of which, Ban Gu 班固 (32-92), lived in the Eastern Han. Neither did the term appear in the earlier work *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the Scribe). Fan Ye provided the first instance of the term in the standard histories but it was not for appointing the imperial marquises and the three dukes. Hence the works of Fan Yue (398-445) and Shen Yue (441-513) possibly reflect the gradual familiarity of the term and its increasing use in reference to ceremonies in their own periods.

²⁷ For example in the case of the empress Song (?-178) of the emperor Ling of Han (156-189), the record detailed the process for how the seal was passed to the empress and how the empress received the decree and the seal. In contrast the procedure of dispatching the messengers were totally absent even though it was noted that the grand guardian and chamberlain for the imperial clan played roles in the proceedings. See the commentary in Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, *zhi* 5: 3121–3122.

549) in the Southern Dynasties (420-589).²⁸ Generally speaking in addition to the delivery of greetings over distance, the emperor's dispatch of messengers started to reflect the authority and power that he granted to the messengers.

The *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li* 大唐開元禮 (Rituals of Kaiyuan [reign 713 AD -741 AD] of the Great Tang, hereafter *Kaiyuan Li*) officially refined the application of the procedure, with the emperor's personal presence at the palace being termed as *linxuan* and the dispatch of messengers as *mingshi*.²⁹ Following Jin precedent, the *linxuan mingshi* appears in the marriage ritual for the empress. Furthermore in the section on the separated prescriptions for the *ce* 冊 (conferment) there was also a *linxuan mingshi* step for the empress. Also under this section of the separated prescriptions for the *ce*, the procedure *linxuan ceming* 臨軒冊命 (emperor's coming to the front of the palace, conferring [titles to the grantees]) was prescribed for the *ce* of the heir apparent, the imperial princes and top ranked officials who would present themselves at the palace. Apart from the delivery over distance, the involvements of the messengers for the *ce* had been associated with gender, as it was assigned for all female grantees over any physical distance.³⁰ The other component of the procedure, *linxuan*, had been given a clear symbolic meaning. In the rituals for the *ce* the emperor's coming to the front of the Taiji Dian 太極殿 (Hall of Supreme Ultimate) where the most important ceremonies took place became a privilege

²⁸ Yao Cha and Yao Silian, *Liangshu*, 1:26–28.

²⁹ The edition using here is Tokyo: Koten Kankyu-kai, 1972 edition.

³⁰ There is also a *nei ce huangtaizi* 內冊皇太子 (Conferring the title to the heir apparent inside [his own palace]) where *linxuan mingshi* is used. However this is only the case when the heir apparent is still a child as his hair is dressed as Shuangtongji 雙童髻 (double hair buns for children) when he visits the imperial shrine after being conferred. Xiao Song, *Da Tang Kaiyuan Li*, 107:504.

for a very select group of members of the imperial family and bureaucracy. Within the imperial family the *linxuan* only occurred in the *ce* for the empress, the sons and daughters of the emperor.³¹ The *ce* for the consorts of the imperial princes and the imperial concubines were delivered by messengers but without the dispatch of the messengers. Similarly the *linxuan* only appeared in the *ce* for officials of rank 1 and was absent in the *ce* for those ranked 2 and below. The *Kaiyuan Li* clarified both the objects and the symbolic meanings of the *linxuan* and the messengers.

In the marriage rituals of the *Kaiyuan Li* the combined *linxuan mingshi* only appeared in the prescriptions for the emperor and the heir apparent. The emperor needed to order the messengers at the Taiji Dian twice for his marriage to the empress, once as a separated step of *linxuan mingshi* before the marriage negotiation and once at the beginning of the *cehou* (conferment of the title of empress) step.³² By contrast there is only one *linxuan mingshi* in the marriage ritual for the heir apparent prior to the marriage negotiation. The different treatments of the *linxuan mingshi* in the marriage rituals for the emperor and the heir apparent demonstrate differentiation of the two meanings for this procedure. The interpretation of *linxuan mingshi* before the marriage negotiation for both emperor and the heir apparent is comparable to the Jin precedent which symbolised that matching was for the marriage of the ruler or his heir. The other *linxuan mingshi* exclusive to the marriage rituals for the emperor under the step for the *ce* resembles the procedure

³¹ I.e. the heir apparent, the imperial princes and the princesses.

³² There is a step of *mingshi fengying* (appointing the messengers and welcoming the [empress]) which prescribes emperor's waiting for the empress to be picked up by messengers from her marital family. However the emperor only stays at his position in the hall where he resides whereas the procedure of dispatch of messengers was not prescribed, neither is the step termed as "*linxuan*" so it does not count here.

under the separated section for the *ce* for the empress.³³ Unlike the Jin precedent where only one procedure was employed for dual functions, in the *Kaiyuan Li* the *linxuan mingshi* developed two parallel modes: one for the marriage of a ruler and his heir and the other for the *ce* of the empress.

Originally the dispatch of the messengers was defined in the classics as a procedure of the *pinli* for sending greetings. In the Jin dynasty (265-420) the emperor's dispatch of the messengers at the front of the palace (i.e. *linxuan qianshi/mingshi*) was formulated within the notion of *linxuan qianshi*. One such procedure appeared in appointing the high officials and was designed after the guest rituals. The other was adopted in the marriage ritual for the emperor. In the Tang (618-907) *Kaiyuan Li* the emperor's presence at the front of the palace (*linxuan*) had been a privilege for promoting people to the top of state. The employment of the messengers (*shi*) was not only for the long distance delivery of the edict but also for female grantees. The notion of the joined terms *linxuan mingshi* that addressed the procedure of emperor's dispatching messenger was imposed with two differentiated modes: starting the marriage negotiations for emperor and the heir apparent as well as for conferring upon the highest ranked female (i.e. the empress). In the Song official prescription *Zhenghe Li* the use of the *linxuan mingshi* remained similar to that in the *Kaiyuan Li*. Yet the term *pin* was absent in both sets of prescriptions for marriage rituals.

³³ A comparison of the marriage ritual and the separated *ce* of the empress and the historical development of the *ce* 冊 (conferring) of the empress can be found in Wu Liyu, "Jianrong Nanbei Datang Kaiyuanli de Cehou Zhi Yuan," 101–15.

THE *CE* (CONFERRING OR CONFERMENT): FROM THE CLASSICS TO
THE *KAIYUAN LI*

The term *ce* usually refers to the procedure for conferring high ranked titles in extant official prescriptions. The *ce* had been an edict granting nobility to aristocrats in classics. It was then employed by the governments of imperial China in different ways for serving their own purposes in the evolving state hierarchy. Although changes occurred to the basis of state hierarchy from time to time receivers of the *ce* always belonged to the upper part of the state hierarchy. Female receivers normally achieved their positions through their marriages or the promotions of their male relatives. The *ce* in the marriage rituals for women of certain classes shows that their marriages would promote their status to the upper ranks. In this and the following sections the use of the *ce* in different periods will be studied alongside its interactions with the developments in the state hierarchy and its application to women.

A political hierarchy had gradually developed since the establishment of the emperorship in the unified Qin (221-206 BC) and Han (206BC-220AD) dynasties. In the Tang (618-917) the ritual prescriptions based on political ranks signified the new political hierarchy's formal replacement of the aristocratic system that had been passed on from the Zhou dynasty (c. 1046–256BC). On the other hand the ritual classics which were in accordance with the Zhou system remained points of reference for the ritual prescriptions throughout imperial China. In ritual prescriptions the meaning of the term “*ce*” had adjusted to function in the developing imperial system, growing distinct from its original definition in the classics. The meaning of the “*ce*” as conferment can be found in a passage of the *Liji*:

In ancient times, [when] the wise rulers grant nobility to the virtuous people and rewarded those who provided meritorious services, it was necessarily [for him] to bestow nobility and reward at the great shrine, in order to show that [he did] not dare to [act] of his own volition. Therefore [after] the first offering of alcohol [to the ancestors], the ruler descended and stood to the south of the stairs on the east, facing the south, the [one who] was being appointed faced the north. The historian on the right of the ruler, held the [the bamboo slips of] the conferment (*ce*) and announced it. [The one who was being conferred the titles] bowed twice with [his] heads to the ground, received the writing (bamboo slips of conferment) and returned, thereupon [he] arranged food and drink to be offered to [the bamboo slips] at his [own] shrine. This was the [rite for] bestowal of the titles of nobility and the rewards.

古者，明君爵有德而祿有功，必賜爵祿於太廟，示不敢專也。故祭之日一獻，君降立于阼階之南，南鄉，所命北面。史由君右執策命之。再拜稽首，受書以歸，而舍奠于其廟，此爵賞之施也。³⁴

³⁴ *Liji Zhushu*, 49:836. This procedure is also termed as *ximing* 錫命 (grant and bestow), for detailed studies with reference to the bronze scripts see Qi Sihe, “Zhou dai Ximing Li Kao,” 50–66. Chen Hanping, *Xi Zhou Ceming Zhidu Yanjiu*, 175–219.

In this passage the *ce* constitutes an essential element of the bestowal of the titles of nobility and rewards. The variant form *ce* 策 literally means bamboo slips.³⁵ The *ce* 策 used in the classics is normally regarded as a loaned form of *ce* 冊.³⁶ In the Han dynasty dictionary *Shuowen Jiezi* 說文解字 (Explanation of Single Component Graphs and Analyses of Compound Characters) the *ce* 冊 is interpreted as

[The character] means the symbol of the mandate. The marquis advances and receives [it] from the ruler. [Its graph] depicts the shape of long and short slips one after other and two cords in the middle [to bind the slips].

符命也。諸侯進受於王者也。象其札一長一短，中有二編之形。³⁷

This dictionary used vague references as the ruler (王者) and the marquis (諸侯) which blurred the difference between its contemporary state hierarchy and that which existed in the past. The Han Empire combined the two systems passed on by the Qin and Zhou dynasties. Its territory consisted of commanderies immediately under the control of the central government (as with the Qin) and surrounding kingdoms controlled by

³⁵In his sub-commentary on the *Yili*, Jia Gongyan notes: “*jian* is referring to one slip and to say *ce* is a reference to a bound collection of slips” (簡謂據一片而言策是編連之稱). *Yili Zhushu*, 24:283.

³⁶The *Shuowen Jiezi* interprets *ce* 策 as a whip (馬箠) and the commentator Duan Yucai 段玉裁 (1735-1815) suggested it as a loaned form for *ce* 冊 in the classics and narratives. Xu Shen and Duan Yucai, *Shuowen Jiezi Zhu*, 5a: 196.

³⁷The graph refers to the *ce* 冊 in small seal script, which writes as 冊. Ibid., 5b: 85.

imperial family members and close allies (as with the Zhou). Thus the ruler could mean the king of Zhou and the marquis the aristocrat in the context of the classics whereas the former can also be interpreted as the emperors and the latter as the imperial marquis (諸侯王) of the Han dynasty. During the Han dynasty the *ce* (in both variant forms 策 and 冊) refers to a type of edict issued by the emperor. Cai Yong 蔡邕 (133-192) described the Han dynasty *ce* as:

It has a format with a length of 2 *chi*, the shorter version is half of its [length = 1 *chi*], it orders as long and short [slips] one after another, two cords, issued in seal script, [the script] starts with year, month and date [and continues with the] statement of “the emperor’s words to command imperial marquises, the king [and/or] the three dukes.” For [any] imperial marquis who dies when he still holds the position, the *ce* is also used to write the eulogy of his deeds and bestow to him, [the format for the *ce* of eulogy] is like the *ce* [to grant the title] to an imperial marquis. [In the case that] [any of] the three dukes are abolished because of [their] faults, a *ce* with text is also bestowed, the format is similar as the above [formats] of the *ce*, but using cleric style in small size [with] two columns [on] one slip, this is the only difference.

其制長二尺，短者半之，其次一長一短，兩編，下附篆書，起年月日，稱皇帝曰，以命諸侯王三公。其諸侯之薨于位者，亦以策書誅謚其行而賜之，如諸侯之策。三公以罪免，亦賜

策文，體如上策，而隸書以尺，一木兩行，唯此為異者也。

38

In fact this account from Cai Yong was apparently his own effort to establish a unified categorisation of the Han edicts rather than to record an existing one. He criticized people of his time who mistook the *jieshu* for the *ceshu* and claimed that *jieshu* 戒書 (alert) were the edicts given to the *cishi* 刺史 (regional inspector), *taishou* 太守 (grand protector) and the military officials at the border. But Cai Yong's recognition of the *ce* having functions other than the granting of titles can be validated. For example a *ce* was given to the empress Chen of Han (孝武陳皇后, 2nd century BC) when officials were sent to confiscate her seal, effectively meaning the abolishment of the empress.³⁹ Furthermore the *ce* was a noun standing for the edict whereas the procedure of granting titles of nobility was referred as *feng* 封 (appoint) for the imperial relatives and meritorious officials who receive lands and *ci* 賜 (bestow) for others.⁴⁰

Around three centuries later in the *Wenxin Diaolong* 文心雕龍 (Literary Mind and the Carving of Dragons), Liu Xie 劉勰 (465-520) portrays a more strict and standardised use of the *ce*:

³⁸ Cai Yong, *Du Duan*, shang: 78.

³⁹ Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 97:3948. A *ce* was sent to empress Wei of the Han (孝武衛皇后, 2nd century – 91 BC) under the same circumstance a couple of decades later. Ibid., 97:3950.

⁴⁰ For more discussions on the differences between *feng* and *ci* see Yang Guanghui, *Han Tang Fengjue Zhidu*, 39–42.

In early Han (202BC -220 AD) the regulations for etiquette were made, as for the edicts there were four classes: the first one was called *ce*, the second one was called *zhi*, the third one was called *zhao*, [and] the forth one was called *jiechi*. *Chi* was to alert the local bureaucracy, *zhao* was to notify all the officials, *zhi* was to give remissions, [and] *ce* was to appoint kings and marquises.

漢初定儀則，則命有四品：一曰策書，二曰制書，三曰詔書，
四曰戒敕。敕戒州部，詔誥百官，制施赦命，策封王侯。⁴¹

As an official who served the last emperors of the Eastern Han, Cai Yong provided a classification of his contemporary edicts from an encyclopaedic perspective.⁴² In contrast Liu Xie examined the edicts with a literary eye that gave comments on the styles and qualities of the edicts in different periods.⁴³ Liu Xie's definition of the *ce* reflects a common understanding of his own time when the edict *ce* was widely acknowledged by its function of appointing kings and marquises.

In the *Kaiyuan Li* the *ce* is formally written as *ce* 冊 which does not only mean an edict but also the procedure for conferring titles.⁴⁴ For the majority of people the

⁴¹ Liu Xie and Zhou Zhengfu, *Wenxin Diaolong Zhushi*, 19:214.

⁴² Cai Yong's biography in Fan Ye, *Hou Hanshu*, 80: 1979–2008.

⁴³ Liu Xie and Zhou Zhengfu, *Wenxin Diaolong Zhushi*, 19:215–216. For a detailed discussion on the studies of genres of edicts up to the Southern and Northern Dynasties see Hou Yinghua, "Lun Han Wei Liuchao Gongwen Wenti Bianxi Lilun de Fazhan," 139–143.

⁴⁴ There were still other uses of the *ce*, e.g. the *aice* 哀冊 (*ce* for grieving) or *shice* 諡冊 (posthumous *ce*) for the deceased or the *ce*.

procedure of granting titles was still termed as “*ce ming*” 冊命 (appointing with an edict). The term “*ce ming*” has a longer history of addressing the procedure. It can be traced back to the classic *Shangshu* 尚書 (Book of Documents) and in the bronze inscriptions dated from the Zhou.⁴⁵ But in the *Kaiyuan Li* there were direct uses of the “*ce*” as a verb which was followed by the grantee, for example *nei ce huangtaizi* 內冊皇太子 (Conferring the title to the heir apparent inside [his own palace]). Apparently from the Tang dynasty onward the use of the *ce* as a verb referring to conferring the titles was more widely accepted and the later prescriptions such as *Zhenghe Li* and *Ming jili* used the *ce* instead of *ce ming* for all of the grantees. In other words the narrowed perception of the *ce* as conferring titles was consolidated in the Tang and passed on to the following dynasties.

The *Kaiyuan Li* prescribed two types of titles to be conferred, those for imperial family members such as *taizi* 太子 (heir apparent) or *qinwang* 親王 (imperial prince) and those for officials.⁴⁶ The procedures of the *ce* was not differentiated by the two types: the *ce* for appointing imperial prince was the same as the officials of rank 1. In the separated sections for the *ce* the prescriptions are arranged in the order of that for the empress, for the heir apparent, for the imperial princes as well as the highest ranked

⁴⁵E.g. *Shangshu Zhushu*, 18: 281). The bronze inscriptions see for example those discussed in Wang Zhiguo, “Jiwen Suojian Xi Zhou Wangchao Guanzhi Yanjiu,” 64–71.

⁴⁶The titles of nobilities still exist, e.g. *guogong* 國公 (duke of state) and the verb *feng* 封 still associated with it. On the other hand *ce* associated with official title. For example Miao Jinqin 苗晉卿 (685-765) who served emperor Xuanzong of the Tang (685-762, r. 712-756) was appointed (*feng*) as the Han guogong 韓國公 (duke of state Han) and (*ce*) as *taibao* 太保 (grand guardian), see Liu Xu, *Jiu Tangshu*, 113: 3351–3352.

officials (rank 1), for the officials (of rank 2 and 3), for the senior concubines of the emperor (those above rank 2) and for other officials. The arrangement of this section actually indicates the order of emperor's subjects regardless of blood-relation or gender.

The procedures of the *ce* for the princesses and the consorts of imperial princes prescribed in their marriage rituals represent another part of the hierarchy. The princesses and the consorts of the imperial princes, along with the mothers and wives of the officials formed the system of so-called *wai mingfu* 外命婦 (outer ladies). The ranks of the *wai mingfu* in the Tang dynasty were also in accordance with the official ranks. While the mothers and wives of officials were given titles matching the ranks of their sons or husbands, the female descendants of the imperial family and the consorts of the imperial princes had their own titles which were treated as within the top ranks.⁴⁷ The ranking system of the *wai mingfu* was fully developed in the Sui dynasty based on the code for their costumes defined in the Jin dynasty (265-420).⁴⁸

As an opposite type the ranking system of the *nei mingfu* 內命婦 (inner ladies) possibly originated from the correspondence made between titles for the concubines of the King Huiwen of the Qin (秦惠文王 354-311 BC) with those for the middle ranked nobilities.⁴⁹ This correspondence was adapted in the unified Qin dynasty (221-207BC)

⁴⁷ Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 46:1188–1189.

⁴⁸ See the author's annotation in Li Linfu, *Tang Liudian*, 2:39. The *wai mingfu* can possibly be traced back to the Han dynasty however the ranking system for titles of the *wai mingfu* was fully developed in the Sui. For details see: Hoshina Sueko, "Kan-Dai No Josei Chitsujo - Myōbu Seido Engen Kō," 22–34.

⁴⁹ For example the title *meiren* 美人 (beauty) is corresponded to the noble title *shao shangzao* 少上造 (junior produce for the ruler) in Dong Yue, *Qiguo Kao*, 777.

into a system with eight ranks of imperial concubines. In the Han dynasty new titles were added to the top of the hierarchy which raised the number of ranks to fourteen. Furthermore a crucial modification to the system was applied: the titles of palaces ladies no longer corresponded only with the equivalent noble titles but also with the titles of officials. For example the political position of the title *zhaoyi* 昭儀 (lady of bright deportment) was regarded as that of the *chengxiang* 丞相 (counsellor-in-chief) while her social status corresponded to that of the *zhuhou wang* 諸侯王 (imperial marquises).⁵⁰ The establishment of the high ranked imperial concubines is likely to have made them an appropriate group qualified to receive the *ce*, which were edicts to the imperial marquises in the Han. The correspondence of the official titles to those of the imperial concubines further developed into a numerical ranking system in the Sui dynasty. The Tang dynasty *nei mingfu* referred to the imperial concubines and the consort of the heir apparent with a ranking system in accordance to the official ranks spanning from rank 1 to 9 (high to low).

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The *ce* was adapted from an edict of granting titles of nobility in the classics to the procedure and the edict conferring titles for imperial family members and for high ranked officials in the *Kaiyuan Li*. In the Han the *ce* had been an edit to imperial marquises for appointing, abolishing and sending eulogies to them. From the Han to the Tang dynasty the system of dividing territory between the hereditary aristocracies gradually declined

⁵⁰ Ban Gu, *Hanshu*, 97: 3935: 昭儀位視丞相，爵比諸侯王。

⁵¹The *nei mingfu* is also referred as *neiguan* (inner officials), see *neiguan* and *taizi neiguan* (inner officials for the heir apparent) in Ouyang Xiu and Song Qi, *Xin Tangshu*, 47:1225, 1230–1232. A detailed account of the development of the *nei mingfu* can be found in Wan Aiyun, “Songchao Nei Mingfu Qianzhuan Wenti Zhi Tanta,” 193–199.

and was taken over by the centralised governmental system with numerical ranking of titles. Meanwhile the ranks of females were matched with those of males and in the Sui a numerical ranking system was also developed for them. Generally women were incorporated and accommodated in the system by marriage and/or blood connection. The high ranked women in the state hierarchy were also prescribed relevant procedure(s) of the *ce* in the *Kaiyuan Li*. The empress assumed a role as the head of the women, who was comparable to the emperor and beyond scope of the ranking system. Below the empress the imperial concubines constituted the hierarchy of inner appointed ladies while the princesses, consort of imperial princes and female relatives of ranked officials were outer appointed ladies. Among all women only the empress had the *ce* prescribed as a separated procedure as well as in her marriage ritual. The *ce* for imperial concubines above rank 2 appeared in the separated section whereas that for princesses, consorts of the heir apparent and imperial princes were prescribed only in their marriage rituals. The fact that the prescriptions of the *ce* for a woman appeared in her marriage ritual prescriptions suggests a direct connection between her marriage and the promotion of her status.⁵²

THE *CE* IN THE MARRIAGE RITUALS: FROM THE *KAIYUAN LI* TO

THE *ZHENGHE LI*

The arrangements of *ce* for women varied according to their statuses and time. In the marriage ritual prescriptions there are also variations correlating to the different types of

⁵²Most likely this applies to the marriage which turns a woman into a primary wife. In fact all the official prescriptions for the marriage rituals were all exclusive for primary wives. Therefore this is by no means to suggest that the *ce* for women in the separated section necessarily mean that their marriages were irrelevant to their statuses (e.g. for the imperial concubines the promotions of their statuses may be based on other criteria such as bearing a male child but their statuses were first gained via their marriages).

relationship existing between the statuses of the women and their marriages. In the *Kaiyuan Li* the *ce* is only prescribed for females related to the imperial family who were at the top of the hierarchies of *nei mingfu* and the *wai mingfu*. For princesses it is arranged at the start of the marriage ritual before the marriage negotiations. Through the *ce* a princess detaches from her pre-marriage status by accepting a title of *wai mingfu* and is then formally positioned in the state hierarchy. The *ce* grants a princess her status obtained via her blood ties with the emperor. In contrast the *ce* for the wives of imperial family members, such as the empress, the consorts of heir apparent and those of imperial princes are all put after the *nazheng* (submission of the proof) during which gifts would be submitted to the woman's family to secure the marriage contract (according to the commentaries of the *Yili*).⁵³ Hence the *ce* in these marriage rituals confer on women their titles and ranks as results of their marriage contracts. Furthermore the promotions of their statuses are also pre-requisites before they can join their new family (the imperial family). In the *Kaiyuan Li* the two different timings of the *ce* for women in the marriage rituals corresponded to two types of impacts of marriages on women at the time.

In the Song (960-1297) prescriptions *Zhenghe wuli xinyi* 政和五禮新儀 (New Etiquettes for the Five [Categories of] Rituals of Zhenghe [reign 1111-1118], henceforth *Zhenghe Li*) the *ce* for the princess was taken away from her marriage ritual and prescribed under a separated section. The *ce* within the marriage rituals were reserved only for the empress and the consort of the heir apparent - there are no prescriptions of the *ce* for the consorts of princes. From the founding of the dynasty the title for the prince's wife, *fei* 妃

⁵³ *Yili Zhushu*, 4: 39, 41.

(consort), was replaced by a more general title, *guo furen* 國夫人 (lady of state), which was also granted to the wives of senior officials such as the *zaixiang* 宰相 (grand councillor), *shizhong* 侍中 (director of the chancellery) and the *zhongshuling* 中書令 (secretariat director).⁵⁴ Therefore a step of “bestowing the mandate” (賜告) instead of the *ce* was employed to grant this title to wives of princes in their marriage rituals.

Further changes were applied to the titles of the *wai mingfu* in the Zhenghe period, almost simultaneously with the issue of the *Zhenghe Li*. Earlier in the Song dynasty the titles *wai mingfu* for the daughters of imperial clan members had been *gongzhu* 公主 (princess), *junzhu* 郡主 (commandery princess), and *xianzhu* 縣主 (district princess). Meanwhile on the other end of the hierarchy the two lowest ranked titles for *wai mingfu* were *junjun* 郡君 (commandery mistress) and *xianjun* 縣君 (district mistress). In the *Zhenghe* period the titles for daughters of imperial clan members were changed to *diji* 帝姬 (imperial lady), *zongji* 宗姬 (lady of the imperial clan) and *zuji* 族姬 (lady of the imperial lineage) from high to low. At the same time the low ranked *junjun* and the *xianjun* were subdivided into seven levels, each with a new title.⁵⁵ The changes in the titles of *wai mingfu* effectively solved the confusion between the *junzhu* and *xianzhu* (that were bestowed on high ranked *wai mingfu*, such as the daughters of the imperial clan members) with the *junjun* and *xianjun* (that were lowest ranked *wai mingfu*). The separation of the procedure of the *ce* for princesses, together with the rephrasing of the titles for *wai mingfu*

⁵⁴ Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 170:4084–4085.

⁵⁵ *Song Da Zhao Ling Ji*, 164:626–627.

were possibly efforts towards the same purpose, to clearly distinguish the female imperial descendants from other *wai mingfu*.⁵⁶

Despite the emphasis on the princesses there was no prescriptions for the *ce* for princes in the *Zhenghe Li*. One possible reason is that there were several titles for princes which formed a ladder to the highest rank *wang* 王 (king) (whereas the princesses only had the title *diji*). The princes were initial appointed as *jiedushi* 節度使 (Military Commissioner) and/or *gong* 公 (duke), and some would be promoted to the *junwang* 郡王 (commandery prince) and *wang* (king). In contrast the princesses received the title *diji* straightforwardly at an early age. For example the daughter of emperor Huizong, princess Chunfu (Chunfu *diji* 純福帝姬 1124-?) received her title before the age of four.⁵⁷ When the Northern Song was defeated by the Jin (1115-1234), all the princesses received the title *diji* while fourteen princes received the title of *wang*, three *junwang*, and nine were *gong*.⁵⁸ The granting of these titles to the princes were totally absent from prescriptions of the *Zhenghe Li*.

⁵⁶ The changes applied in the Zhenghe period were partially rejected by the following emperor who re-established the dynasty as the Southern Song after the Jurchen conquest of northern China. In the first year of Jianyan period (1127-1130) of Gaozong 高宗 (1107-1187) the titles for daughters of imperial family members were restored to those used in the beginning of the dynasty (*gongzhu*, *junzhu* and *xianzhu*) while the titles for other *wai mingfu* remained the same as those that were conferred in the Zhenghe period. See Li Xinchuan, *Jianyan Yilai Xinian Yaolu*, 6:151. Then the titles for the *waimingfu* confirmed in the Jianyan period are likely to have lasted until the end of the dynasty as they constitute the ranking system for *wai mingfu* as recorded in the dynastic history *Songshi*. (Tuotuo, *Songshi*, 163: 3837–3838.)

⁵⁷ The princess Chunfu was captured by the Jin (1115-1234) army at the age of four when she had already received her title. See “Kaifeng Fu Zhuang Qianzheng,” 101.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 93–96.

Thus the *Zhenghe Li* restrains the use of the *ce*. It was then only available for the empress, the heir apparent, the princesses and the imperial concubines, whereas the princes and their wives, and the officials and their wives were all excluded from the prescriptions for *ce*. This was an innovation of the *Zhenghe Li* as the Tang model still followed in a slightly earlier set completed in 1065, the *Taichang yinge li* 太常因革禮 (Inherited and Changed Rituals of Court of Imperial Sacrifices). In the earlier set of ritual prescriptions the imperial princes and officials share the same prescriptions for the *ce*.⁵⁹ Furthermore in the marriage ritual prescriptions of the *Zhenghe Li* the *ce* to the females was more exclusive prescribed (it was only for the empress and the consort of the heir apparent) when comparing to the *Kaiyuan Li* (where it was prescribed for the empress, consorts of heir apparent and imperial princes, and princesses). The grading of titles for the princes led to a general devaluation in the statuses that their wives gained through their marriage. Both of them were removed as receivers of the *ce* in the *Zhenghe Li*.

THE *CE*, THE *NAZHENG* (SUBMISSION OF THE PROOF) AND THE DISPATCH OF MESSENGERS IN THE HONGWU PRESCRIPTIONS

Completed in Hongwu 3 (1370), the first comprehensive set of official prescriptions of the Ming dynasty (1368-1644) - the *Mingjili* bears some resemblances to the *Zhenghe Li* in the treatment of the *ce*. Officials are excluded from the prescriptions for the *ce* and the *ce* for princesses is only prescribed as a separated procedure. Nevertheless the *ce* for the imperial princes and their consorts were both restored. Thus the procedure *ce* in the *Ming*

⁵⁹ This can be deduced from the index of the *Taichang yinge li* as the prescriptions for the *ce* for imperial princes and officials (*juan* 57) in this set were lost. See Ouyang Xiu and Su Xun, *Taichang Yinge Li*, index: 10a.

jili are exclusively prescribed for imperial family members (the empress, the heir apparent and his consort, imperial princes and their consorts, princesses and imperial concubines). In other words, the *ce* in the *Ming jili* was a way to differentiate imperial family members from the rest of the state with the *cebao* 冊寶 (conferment and seal) as identifications for members of the imperial family.⁶⁰

In the *Mingjili* the restored procedure of the *ce* for consorts of the imperial princes is further elevated by the emperor's dispatching of messengers at the Fengtian Dian 奉天殿 (Hall of Serving the Heaven) in their marriage rituals. This *ce* for the consorts of the imperial princes is prescribed as a separated step for which "the etiquette is the same as that within the marriage rituals for the heir apparent" which is in fact a simplified version of the procedure termed as *linxuan* in the *ce* for the empress in the marriage ritual.⁶¹ In this set of the prescriptions the emperor attends the procedures of the *ce* for his primary wife (empress), all his sons and their consorts and his daughters (princesses), and his officials formed the audience. The emperor's presence in the *ce* in the *Mingjili* emphasises on the relationship between the emperor and the imperial family members who were to receive the *ce*. On the other hand the *Mingjilli* followed the arrangement of the marriage rituals for the emperor and the heir apparent in the *Zhenghe Li* and the *Kaiyuan Li*, in that both place the emperor's appointing messengers before the marriage negotiations. This separated step at the beginning of the marriage rituals makes the most significant

⁶⁰ Seal as *yin* 印 for princess. In the *Kaiyuan li* seal is not granted to any consort of imperial princes or princesses. In the *Zhenghe li* the wife of an imperial prince gets neither conferment nor seal.

⁶¹ Xu Yikui, *Mingjili*, 27: 564: 其儀與皇太子納妃同. The Fengtian Dian was the palace for important ceremonies in the Hongwu reign.

difference between the marriage rituals for the heir apparent and those for imperial princes in the *Mingjili*.⁶²

Generally speaking the *Mingjili* still follows the basic sequence of steps for the marriage ritual which originated from the *Yili* and was adapted in succeeding prescriptions. It begins with the series of marriage negotiations with gift submissions. The marriage agreement is secured by the *nazheng*, then the bride is picked up from her natal family. This is followed by the union of the couple and then the bride's meeting with her parents-in-law. The framework changed significantly around two decades later in the Hongwu 26 (1393) prescriptions. This set discarded the first three steps of gift submission. Thus the *nazheng* was the first and only negotiation remaining in the marriage rituals for imperial princes. The prescriptions start with a list of the "gifts for appointing the relatives" (定親禮物) with instructions for sending the gifts and receiving gifts in return from the consort's family. Then there are "gifts [for] the *nazheng*" (納徵禮物) followed by the "*nazheng*" itself as dispatching messengers and the "*feijia xing nazheng li*" as the submission of the gifts to the consort's family. The gifts for appointing the relatives explicitly state that the following *nazheng* was no longer a procedure aiming to achieve the approval for marriage from the lady's family as defined in the classics.

Yet the gifts listed in the classical texts, such as the *gugui* 玉穀圭 (pointed jade tablet with millet-shaped patterns) and *xuanxun* 玄纁 (black and red silk) were still placed

⁶² The only other difference was two variant forms of the report to the imperial shrine: one as "sacrifice and report [at the imperial shrine]" at in the early stage of the heir apparent's marriage ritual and "visiting [imperial] shrine" at the end of the marriage ritual for imperial princes.

at the beginning of the list of the gifts for the *nazheng*. The *xuanxun* remained the essential gift for the *nazheng* as defined in the *Yili*. The silk in the two colours symbolised the readiness of the *yin* and *yang* (for the marriage) according to the primary commentator Zheng Xuan 鄭玄 (127-200) and is considered to have been used as the material for the ritual costumes in the pre-Qin period.⁶³ The *gugui* is likely to be derived from Zheng Xuan's commentaries to the *Zhouli*:

[As for the submission of the proof] the ordinary officials and the counsellors use black and red silk, the son of heaven adds [a] *gugui* [upon the silk], the marquises add [a] big *zhang* [jade object shaped as a half of a *gui*].

士大夫乃以玄纁束帛，天子加以穀圭，諸侯加以大璋。⁶⁴

According to the commentary the *gugui* is the gift used by the son of heaven in the *nazheng*. In fact the *gugui* was used only in the marriage rituals for emperor and the heir apparent whereas the *zhang* was used for the imperial princes in all the precedents (the *Kaiyuan Li* and the *Zhenghe Li, Mingjili*). The Hongwu 26 (1393) prescriptions were the first time that the *guigu* was seen as a gift in the *nazheng* for the imperial princes. Its use possibly suggests that the emperor was regarded as taking on the main role in the so-called “*nazheng*”. Moreover the step prescribed as the *nazheng* was the procedure of the emperor's dispatch of the messengers in the palace. In other words, the term and the gifts

⁶³ For the symbolic meaning see Zheng Xuan's commentary in *Yili Zhushu*, 2: 42. For materials for ritual costumes see the discussions in the Du You, *Tongdian*, 58: 1652.

⁶⁴ *Zhouli Zhushu*, 14:217.

of the *nazheng* derived from the classic text were used as a cover for a procedure of dispatching messengers which was carried out by the emperor in the palace. The redefinition of the *nazheng* and the removal of the other negotiations at the lady's family transformed the basis of the marriage rituals from one between two families to one centred on the emperor. The choice of the term "*nazheng*", the term for the milestone within the four negotiating steps, effectively set the associated procedure (emperor's dispatch of the messengers) at the level of highest importance in the marriage rituals.

In the Hongwu 26 prescriptions the *ce* is arranged similarly to the *nazheng* and further elevated by the increased number of prescribed steps. There are in total three headings prescribed for the *ce*. The first two are the appointment of the messengers at the palace and the arrival of the *ce* at the consort's family. While the first two headings resemble those prescribed for the *nazheng*, the prescriptions for the *ce* ends with an heading prescribing the consort's acceptance to the *ce*. Furthermore, in the list of the "gifts for the dispatching the *ce*" the ritual costumes for the consort are included whereas her casual costume is listed under the "gifts for the *nazheng*". The increasing number of steps and the association of the ritual costumes as its gifts establish the *ce* at a level of importance that is comparable to or likely more elaborate and formal than the *nazheng*.

The timing of the *ce* also suggests the increase in its importance in the Hongwu 26 (1393) and 27 (1394) sets of the prescriptions. In the Hongwu 26 prescriptions the *ce* is scheduled immediately after the *nazheng* whereas in all the precedents there is a step between them, the *qingqi* 請期 (requesting the date [of picking up the bride from her natal family]). The *qingqi* forms part of the norm of the marriage rituals (six rites). It is the

first step without the term *na* (submission) and signifies that agreement has been archived on the marriage.⁶⁵ In the Hongwu 26 prescriptions for marriage rituals the *qingqi* was absent. Instead there is a list of “gifts for expediting adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]” (催妝禮物) inserted after the *ce*. In the following set of prescriptions (Hongwu 27, 1394) the *cuiizhuang* becomes more visible. Along with the merging of the *nazheng* and the *ce*, the term *cuiizhuang* was added into the heading for the step which became *nazheng face cuiizhuang* 納徵發冊催妝 (submission of the proof, dispatching the *ce* and expediting the adornment [of the wife with make-up/jewellery]). The procedure under the heading of *nazheng face cuiizhuang* is the emperor’s dispatching the messengers at the palace. The *cuiizhuang* does not appear in the emperor’s decree which explicitly instructs the messengers to perform the rites of the *nazheng* and *face* (dispatching of the *ce*). Actually the attachment of the term *cuiizhuang* to the step did not involve any additional procedure.

The *cuiizhuang* was not from the classics but was adopted from wedding custom. It included activities such as composing poems on the day of picking up the bride in the Tang dynasty and became sending gifts such as cosmetics and accessories for bride’s make-up in the Song dynasty.⁶⁶ The gift list in the Hongwu 26 prescriptions is the first appearance of the *cuiizhuang* in official ritual prescriptions. The prescribed gifts for *cuiizhuang* consists of two goats, twenty bottles of alcohol and two boxes of fruits. These gifts were different from the customary gifts for the bride’s make-up, so the inclusion of

⁶⁵ *Yili Zhushu*, 4: 42.

⁶⁶ Wu Zimu, *Menglianglu*, 20:186.

the list is unlikely simply an attempt to introduce existing marriage custom. In addition the gifts are not as valuable as the gold sent as the gifts for *dingqin* and *nazheng*, nor as special as the *gugui* and the *xuanxun*. In fact all of these gifts have already been prescribed to be offered in the previous steps and the amounts set out for them in the gifts for *cuizhuang* are less than those listed previously.⁶⁷ In other words the gifts for this *cuizhuang* were not remarkable, did not follow the custom, and neither were they in great amount or value. The prescriptions for the *cuizhuang* appear to have a function beyond being ordinary gifts and enshrining customs in the prescriptions.

In both Hongwu 26 and 27 prescriptions the *cuizhuang*, along with the *nazheng*, marked the progress of the marriage ritual.⁶⁸ In the Hongwu 26 prescriptions the headings of the *ce* are placed between the headings for the *nazheng* and the *cuizhuang* while in the Hongwu 27 prescriptions the term *face* (dispatching the conferment) appears between the term *nazheng* and the term *cuizhuang* in the heading. In the two sets of prescriptions the timing of the *cuizhuang* possibly symbolises that the marriage ritual has passed its crucial stage since the *cuizhuang* can be an alternative to the *qingqi*.⁶⁹ In this sense the *ce* no longer happens after the completion of the marriage agreement as in the precedents. In these two prescriptions the *ce* is scheduled at the critical point of the marriage ritual together with the *nazheng*. Particularly in the Hongwu 27 prescriptions the *cuizhuang* is

⁶⁷ Four goats, eighty bottles of alcohol and six boxes of fruits are listed in the gifts for the fixing the relatives and twenty-two goats, two hundred bottles of alcohol and twenty-two boxes of fruits for the *nazheng*.

⁶⁸ See Figure IV-1 (appended to the chapter).

⁶⁹ There are very few accounts of the meaning of the *cuizhuang*. Lü Kun (呂坤 1536-1618) suggested that the *cuizhuang* is an equivalence of *qingqi*, see Lü Kun, *Sili Yi*, 3:54[5b]. See also Chen Peng, *Zhongguo Hunyin Shigao*, 248–250.

inserted in the end of the first of the two steps prescribed for the merged *nazheng* and *ce*. It signifies the completion of the marriage agreement by the dispatch of the messengers prescribed in the first step. The acceptance of the *nazheng* and the *ce* by the lady's family in the second step is merely a consequence of the first step. In this way the emperor's initiative replaces approval from the lady's family and becomes the determinant for the marriage.

The step that takes place at the consort's family in the Hongwu 27 prescriptions also places an emphasis on the *ce*. In the Hongwu 26 set the submission of the gifts at consort's family (under the step *feijia xing nazheng li*) prescribes that the primary messenger holds the jade *gugui* and the secondary messenger holds the silk bunches of *xuanxun*. The *gugui* and *xuanxun* are then passed to the host of the consort's family by the primary and the secondary messengers. The *cezhi feijia* in the same set prescribes that the primary messenger holds the *jie* 節 (pledge) with two hands and the secondary messenger holds the *ce*. In the Hongwu 27 set neither the *nazheng* nor *ce* appear in heading for the step combining the procedure of the *nazheng* and the *ce*. Under the *feijia shoupin* step the prescriptions instruct the messengers to enter the consort's family in the manner of the previous *ce*: the primary and secondary messengers holding the *jie* and the *ce*. The symbolic gifts for the *nazheng*, the *gugui* and *xuanxun*, are to be carried and passed to the host directly by the messengers' assistants. In other words, with a focus on the delivery of the *ce*, the *gugui* and *xunxuan* are submitted as gifts linking the *ce* sent by the emperor to his son's new in-laws. Hence they are no longer proof for consort's family's agreement to the marriage but for the emperor's acknowledging the consort's family as marital relatives.

The two sets of prescriptions of stage three both increased the importance of the *ce* while the latter further emphasised on the emperor's approval to the marriage. Both sets of prescriptions were efforts at converting the family ritual to a government appointment where the consort's family was no longer considered as a party possessing power over the marriage agreement. The difference between the two sets lies in the recipients of the governmental appointment. In the Hongwu 26 prescriptions with the separated titles for the *ce* the recipient is still the consort herself. However when the *nazheng* is merged into the *ce* in the Hongwu 27 prescriptions the family are appointed together with the consort. As matter of fact when the consort of a Ming imperial prince came from a commoner's family, her father would be appointed as a *bingma zhihui* 兵馬指揮 (Warden, rank 6a). *Bingma zhihui* was a title referring the head of a ward in a capital city and did not belong to military personnel.⁷⁰ The father of the consort who married the Prince of Ning in the tenth moon of Hongwu 27 was probably the first *bingma zhihui* ever appointed.⁷¹

⁷⁰ See the list of military officials of different ranks in Shen Shixing, [Wanli] *Da Ming Huidian*, 118: 613–614.

⁷¹ Chen Jiang argues that the *bingma zhihui* Zhang Tai 張泰 was a military official who fought in battles against the rebellions in Huizhou and Guizhou, see Chen Jiang, "Ming Fanwang Hunpei Zhidu Kaolue," 88. However in the first battle in Huizhou, Zhang Tai was a *zhihui tongzhi* 指揮同知 (vice commander) of Ganzhou ranked 3b in 1388 (Hongwu 21) (*Ming Taizu Shilu*, 190:2869.). In the second battle in Guizhou, Zhangtai was a *zhihui* of Guizhou ranked 6a in 1390 (Hongwu 23)(*Ibid.*, 203:3047.) There is another record for 1393 (Hongwu 26) when Zhang Tai was appointed *anchasi qianshi* 按察司僉事 (assistant surveillance commissioner) of Shaanxi ranked 5a or 5b. It is difficult to validate whether all these record refer to the same person or not. However the title of *bingma zhihui* (ranked 6a) for father-in-law Zhang Tai of the prince Ning was addressed without any regional affiliation (*Ibid.*, 233:3405.) Due to the fact that each of *bingma zhihui si* 兵馬指揮司 (warden's office) was based at a city, the father-in-law Zhang Tai was possibly not an official when hold the title with any duties but more likely to have received the title through his daughter's marriage. In the later periods of the Ming dynasty most of the imperial princes were married off to the daughters of commoners who were then appointed as *bingma zhihui* and later with regional affiliations but still without any duties. The common understanding is that this practice began with the Xuande emperor 宣德 (1426-1435, r.1425-1435) as his marriage policy for imperial prince matching up with commoners. (For example Yang Cheng, "Mingdai Huangshi Yu Xuncheng Tonghun

Among the eight sons of the emperor married in this stage, one was matched with an ennobled in-law, two with newly promoted officials of rank 1a. Three married to daughters of officials of the *Wei* 衛, a basic military unit normally with around 5600 military personnel;⁷² the other two with *bingma zhihui*.⁷³ This is in contrast to the second stage of the Hongwu reign (Hongwu 8-26, 1375-1393) when all the imperial princes were married off to the daughters of meritorious officials at the top of the state hierarchy. The statuses of the families which became the marital relatives of the imperial princes dropped from Hongwu 27.⁷⁴

This change in the emperor's marriage policy for imperial princes appears to be the result of several crucial events which greatly influenced the political landscape. The death of the former heir apparent in the fourth moon of the Hongwu 25 (1392) was a great challenge for the emperor. Five month later (in the ninth moon) the emperor made his

Zhuangkuang Juewei," 144. Wei Lianke, "Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue," 181.) However according to records of the marriages of the imperial princes, apparently the selections of marital relatives of low statuses began in Hongwu 27 (1394) but was formulated and fully enforced by the Xuande emperor.

⁷² The *zhihui* seemed not to be a specific title but a general reference to *duzhihui* 都指揮 (Commander, rank 3a), *zhihui tongzhi* 指揮同知 (Vice Commander, rank 3b) and *zhihui qianshi* 指揮僉事 (Assistant Commander, rank 4a). (The similar use of *zhihui* can be seen in the *Mingshi*, see note 5 in Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 1974, 2:38. All of the three titles worked at the *Wei* 衛 (Guards), the basic unit of military organization. Charles Oscar Hucker, *A Dictionary of Official Titles in Imperial China* (Beijing: Beijing daxue shubanshe, 2008), 159. There were normally 5600 military personnel. In Hongwu 26 there were in total 493 *Wei*. Du Wanyan and Fang Zhiyuan, *Zhongguo Zhengzhi Zhidu Tongshi: Mingdai*, 318.

⁷³ See the table for information on the consorts of the princes appended to Wei Lianke, "Mingdai Zongshi Hunjia Zhidu Shulue," 137–198. The rank is according to Zhang Tingyu, *Mingshi*, 74: 1814–1815.

⁷⁴ All the imperial princes married in the second stage of the Hongwu reign were all matched to daughters of those who had been ennobled or who were ennobled shortly afterwards. Even for the two imperial princes married in the first stage of the Hongwu reign, ennobled in-laws were arranged for them in the second phase. The Prince of Qin married his second consort, the daughter of Duke of State Wei (衛), Deng Yu 鄧愈 (1338-1378) in Hongwu 8 (1375). (*Ming Taizu Shilu*, 102:1717–1720.) The father of the consort of the Prince of Jin, Xie Cheng 謝成 was ennobled in Hongwu 12 (1379). The titles of nobilities were considered above all the official ranks during the Hongwu reign.

decision that his grandson, rather than his other sons (the imperial princes) should be appointed as the new heir apparent. The emperor experimented with different options for solving the consequent conflicts between the state and family hierarchies. He firstly appointed some nobles to be assistants of the new heir apparent such as Duke of State Liang Lan Yu 藍玉 (?-1393) as the grand mentors of heir apparent (太子太傅). Lan Yu 藍玉 (?-1393) had defeated the Mongol forces at Lake Buyur in Hongwu 21 (1388) and was two generations senior to the new heir apparent in the family hierarchy.⁷⁵ Three month after this appointment Lan Yu was executed and more nobles of similar status were eliminated in the following years.⁷⁶ The emperor paved the way for his grandson who had disadvantage in the family hierarchy by reducing the potential risks that would stem from the powerful ennobled in-laws of his sons.

The Hongwu 26 and 27 sets of prescriptions reflected the hesitation of the emperor in his strategy of managing his family after the tragic death of his oldest son. The first set of prescriptions was issued in the first moon of Hongwu 26 when Lan Yu still held the position of grand mentor of the new heir apparent. In the following month Lan Yu's fate changed dramatically. The emperor began to eliminate several ennobled in-laws of the imperial princes with Lan Yu as the first target. In the first moon of the following year the Hongwu emperor ordered the ministry of rites to select the consorts for the imperial family members from several provinces in the north.⁷⁷ Before the subsequent marriages of

⁷⁵ Lan Yu was uncle-by-law of the former heir apparent (i.e. the father of the new heir apparent), also parent-in-law of the Prince of Shu (Zhu Chun 朱椿, 1371-1423).

⁷⁶ *Ming Taizu Shilu*, 223: 3296–3297.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 231:3376.

imperial princes the Hongwu 27 set of prescriptions had been issued. It is likely that after the publication of the first set the emperor eventually settled on his decision to remove several of his sons' threatening in-laws. Then his selections of the consorts for the imperial princes were switched from the central government to the local area. The comparison between the two sets of prescriptions is illustrative of how the revisions to marriage ritual prescriptions for imperial princes corresponded with the changes in strategy of the emperor's management of the family and state during the two years. Furthermore, the innovations to the *ce*, *pin* and *nazheng* were introduced before the marriages of the imperial princes with low status wives. Hence these innovations were not passive receptions of the changes in the statuses of the imperial relatives in reality. Rather they were means of promoting or even clarifying the ideology behind the changes in the marriage policy, the formal conversion from the former purpose of establishing affiliations for imperial princes' families to the recruiting of their marital relatives as imperial subjects.

CONCLUSION

This chapter studies the changes to the *ce*, *nazheng* and *pin* (dispatch of the messengers) which represent the main difference between the official prescriptions for imperial princes' marriage rituals in the third stage of the Hongwu reign (Hongwu 26 and 27, 1393/1394). The three terms were derived from different sources in classical texts. The dispatch of the messengers was a part of the *pinli* which formerly was the sending of greetings between members of the aristocracy. The term *ce* was originally the edict of a ruler in the granting of titles of nobility. The term *nazheng* was the critical step in the marriage ritual to obtain the marriage agreement from the woman's family. From at least the Jin dynasty the

dispatch of messengers was taken from the sending of greetings and adopted as the sending of the messages in the marriage rituals as well as for granting titles. These two functions are clearly differentiated in the Tang *Kaiyuanli*, resulting in two modes of the emperor's dispatching messengers in the marriage rituals for the emperor and the heir apparent. These two modes are inherited by the Song *Zhenghe Li*. The *ce* was adapted as a term referring to the procedure for granting ranks including those for the females in the state hierarchy in the *Kaiyuan Li*. In particular the *ce* was inserted into the marriage rituals to establish the direct relationship between a woman's status and her marriage with varying arrangements for different types of relationships. Further differentiations in the prescriptions for the procedures of the *ce* can be observed in the *Zhenghe Li* due to the different treatments for the granting of titles to imperial family members in the reign. In these precedents the connotation, implication, and implementation of the term and the procedures of the *ce* and *pin* developed along with their practical and prescriptive uses whereas the *nazheng* was comparatively stable in all these aspects.

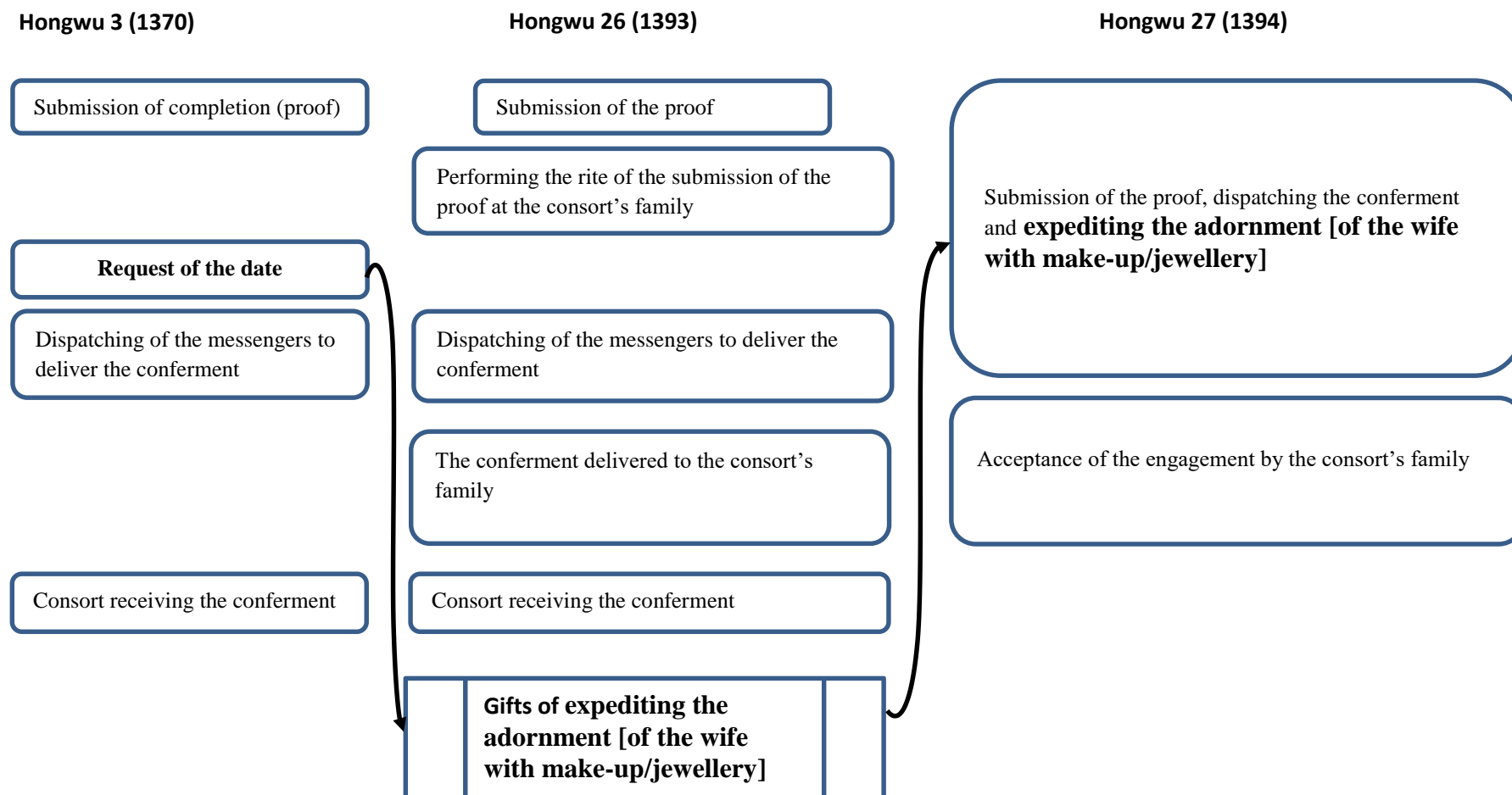
In the Hongwu 26 and 27 sets of prescriptions, the *nazheng* was first associated to the dispatch of the messengers and then was subordinated to the procedure of the *ce*. The procedure of dispatching messengers was termed as *nazheng face cuizhuang* in the Hongwu 27 prescriptions. The terms and the procedures were merged and adjusted in a way which simultaneously invokes the feeling of a critical step in the marriage rituals and the idea of status identification by the authority of the emperor. The step at the consort's family was termed as *feijia shoupin* where the focus was set on the *ce*. The resulting prescriptions which innovatively mixed and matched the terms and procedures of *nazheng*,

ce and *pin* eventually evolved into steps symbolising the marriage rituals as recruiting imperial relatives instead of the agreement between two families.

The two sets of prescriptions presented a valuable case that sheds light on the nature of the ritual prescriptions. The Hongwu 26 set of prescriptions was completed less than eight months after the death of the heir apparent when all of the imperial princes were still in their one-year mourning period for their brother. Hence it was not for any immediate application, but to serve as a long-term reference. The merger of the *ce* and the *nazheng* also appeared in the set of prescriptions for the heir apparent compiled in Chenghua 23 (1487).⁷⁸ While the rationale and symbolic meaning of the Chenghua set could be the objective of another research quest, such an arrangement shows that the Hongwu 27 prescriptions had an impact on later prescriptions, and very likely also on the later practice.

⁷⁸ [Wanli] *Da Ming huidian*, 68: 1111.

Figure IV-1 The revisions of *nazheng* (submission of the proof), *ce* (conferment) and relevant procedures during the Hongwu reign



Conclusion

This thesis examines the changes in the marriage rituals for imperial princes in the Hongwu reign (1368-1398). The research proceeds from the extraction of textual revisions, to an analysis of the adjustments in the relationships between the parties involved in the rituals of interest and finally assesses the connection between these changes and the fates of in-laws of the imperial princes in contemporary Ming politics. The first chapter scrutinizes relevant historical events in both the *wen* (civil) and the *wu* (military) spheres. It establishes that the movements in the *wu* (military) coincided with the changes to the rituals of interest which were essentially developments in the *wen* (civil) sphere. The following three chapters each dealt with one symbol or one group of symbols which received the most significant revisions at each stage in the changes to the rituals in the Hongwu reign. Textual comparisons of the contexts of the symbols in rituals of different periods were extensively conducted in order to delineate the Hongwu innovations. Furthermore the resulting trajectories of the changes in the symbols in previous dynasties also contributed to the analysis of the innovations in their meanings in the Hongwu period. The innovative meanings of the symbols were situated within their relevant historical context in the Hongwu reign. This concluding chapter will first give an overall picture of how the Hongwu emperor's strategy of family and state organization interacted with the rituals of interest at different development stages. I will then estimate the patterns of evolution of the symbols of state hierarchy in the marriage rituals studied in previous chapters. Finally this thesis will reflect on the methodological framework that the thesis has presented, focusing on the use of symbols in institutionalised rituals.

THE HONGWU REIGN: INNOVATIONS IN RITUAL FOR A
HYBRID OF THE IMPERIAL FAMILY AND THE POWER
HIERARCHY

The emperor initialised the ritual institution at the beginning of the reign when heavily he relied on the support of his Confucian officials. Yet through the growing experiences with rituals the emperor formed his own theory of rituals. After his successful interference in the grand sacrifices he cast aside his “incompetent” Confucian officials and carried on with his peculiar project of maturing the ritual institution within a generation. The two transitional time points in the marriage rituals for the imperial princes (the developments in the *wen* aspect) were associated with the processes in adjusting the distribution of military power (that in the *wu* aspect). The tracing of the progress between the stages is observable and an overall picture is projected for the interactions between the Hongwu emperor’s efforts regarding rituals and the delegation of military power.

During the first stage (Hongwu 1-8, 1368-1375) two different scales for marriage rituals appeared in the *Mingjili*. The comparisons between marriage rituals of different dynasties suggest that the changing scale corresponded to the shifting lines of division between classes within the state hierarchy. In particular the patriarchal line of the emperor’s immediate family was emphasised in the Hongwu reign by the unprecedentedly reduced distance between the imperial princes and the heir apparent. The historical survey suggested the other possibilities for positioning the emperor’s lesser sons: they were closer to the ranked officials in the Tang and in a separate section together with the princesses in the Song. In the Hongwu reign the emperor designated the imperial princes higher than any non-imperial blood. Furthermore a

plan of principalities granting power to the imperial princes which resembled the Yuan organization and deviated from the Tang and Song precedents was conceived by the emperor and partly objected to by scholars such as Ye Boju. Accordingly both scales in the *Mingjili* appear to have agreed on the general elevation of the imperial princes with reservations in the level of their elevation. The differences between them is to some extent an embodiment of the struggle between the Yuan legacy and the Tang and Song precedents for managing the state and the family, which was at the same time a struggle between two groups of compilers with different opinions.

In the first stage the emperor had not yet formally integrated imperial princes into the power hierarchy, and neither had formalised their marriage policy. However at the beginning of the second stage when the emperor was preparing for dispatching the first group of the imperial princes to the principalities, he started to match up the imperial princes with the daughters of the top ranked military nobles. The first match of this type was the marriage between the Prince of Qin and the daughter of Duke of State of Wei, Deng Yu in Hongwu 8 (1375). A year before this marriage the emperor successfully implanted his own idea into the mourning clothes for the Noble Consort Sun. In the ritual for this marriage the couple offered sacrifices to the imperial ancestors in the inner shrine (Fengxian Dian) after the consort's arrival at the palace but before the first night. The clear separation of the inner and outer imperial shrines as an innovation of the Hongwu emperor was elucidated by tracing the evolution of the imperial shrines in preceding dynasties. Through the changes in the uses of the imperial shrines in grand sacrifice, the symbolic meanings of differentiation between the inner and outer sections in the power hierarchy became clear. The differentiation appears to have been a consolidation of the elevated positions of the imperial princes as opposed to the meritorious officials, especially the ennobled ones. The marriage

rituals in Hongwu 8 provided a means of connection between an imperial prince who belonged to the inner section and his consort from the outer section as a daughter of a noble family. The revision to the ancestral sacrifice in the marriage rituals for imperial princes signified the formation of the general marriage policy for imperial princes for the following two decades, covering all of the marriages between the imperial princes and the daughters of nobles or nobles-to-be occurring between Hongwu 8-26 (1375-1393).

As mentioned on several occasions in this thesis, the death of the emperor's oldest son in Hongwu 25 (1392) created instability in the power structure. By this time the imperial princes had grown to be a powerful group with all of their surviving in-laws untouched in the first purge of officials. After appointing the imperial grandson as the new heir apparent the emperor had to decide on the proper distribution of power. The situation was settled in the second moon of Hongwu 26 (1393) when the emperor targeted Lan Yu as the first in-law of imperial princes to be eliminated. Thereupon the emperor eliminated more than half of the ennobled in-laws of imperial princes in the following years. He then listed the few remaining ennobled in-laws as permanent imperial relatives in the collective work of regulations for the imperial clan, the *Huang Ming Zuxun*. The emperor's changing attitude towards the marriages of the imperial princes from affiliation with, to recruiting, the consort's family became clear through the analysis of the Hongwu 27 (1394) revision merging the *nazheng* (submission of the proof) and the *ce* (conferring or conferment). Afterwards the emperor experimented with another new policy for the imperial princes by marrying them to non-military officials.

Afterwards the emperor experimented with another new policy for the imperial princes by marrying them to the non-military officials.

From the cases presented in chapters II to IV it has been demonstrated that there were two causes of the innovations in the social relationships symbolised by the rituals of interest. The rituals could either be the reflection of historical developments prior to their compilation or the delivery of a strategy tailored to the historical environment at its compilation. The general elevation of the imperial princes by the rituals of interest in the first stage of the Hongwu reign was a reflection of perceptions of the close positions of the male members of the imperial family, which was a legacy of the organization of the Yuan state. Meanwhile the two scales demonstrated the disagreement among the Confucian scholars who had different opinions about the state organization regarding the relative positions of the heir apparent and the imperial princes. In the following two stages the changes in the *wu* aspect had been causes of the updates to the *wen*. During the two stages the emperor's strategies of affiliating the imperial princes with nobles and subordinating their in-laws were implemented in the developments of the rituals. The first strategy was tailored to the historical context of the dispatch of the imperial princes and the second was tailored to the appointment of the imperial grandson.

The Hongwu emperor's ambition of "reviving" the ancient ruling system and governing through his blood raised practical challenges in defining the social and political relations between the imperial princes and their in-laws. The order of his family and state was different from that of previous dynasties when most of the available precedents of rituals had been produced. His concern over the marital relations for the imperial princes was the reason why special attention was paid to the marriage rituals for them. In these circumstances, during the latter two stages innovations were designed upon the formation of the relative policies. Correspondingly the injection of the state hierarchy into the relationship between

parties of marriages in the case of imperial princes accounts for the centrepiece of the innovations in these two stages. In the second stage a hierarchy beginning with the inner shrine Fengxian Dian, the emperor and the empress, and the consort's parents was presented in the series of the steps performed by both of the couple. In the third stage a step of the marrying couple's visit to the heir apparent and his consort was inserted between their visit to the emperor and empress and that to the consort's parents. Thus the heir apparent and his consort constituted a layer under the emperor and empress in the hierarchy which both the imperial princes and their consorts and the parents of the consorts should attend to. This arrangement enforced the position of the heir apparent who was the nephew of the imperial princes when the Hongwu 26 prescriptions were issued.

The marriage rituals of imperial princes were revised in each stage in order to arrange the relationships involved in their marriages in the state hierarchy. Through the marriage rituals the imperial princes and their in-laws were positioned in the hybrid structure of the imperial family and the hierarchy of power. The innovations in the marriage rituals also unprecedentedly changed the life passages of the involved parties. The reschedule of the ancestral sacrifice in the second stage and the merger of the submission of the proof and the *ce* in the third stages both had an impact on the structures of the rituals of interest. In addition there was also the removal of existing steps, the absorption of the steps from customs as well as the introduction of the unpreceded step of visiting the heir apparent. These changes in the structures of the rituals of interest in turn altered the starting and ending points of the passages for the involved parties. For example in the Tang and Song precedents, the passage for the consort of an imperial prince would end with the visit to her parents-in-law whereas in the first stage of the Hongwu reign it would end with the presentation at the imperial

shrine. Nevertheless both of these steps symbolise her incorporation into the imperial family, while only the latter extended her incorporation to the whole clan. However in the second and third stages her passage would end with the visit to her own family together with her husband. This change symbolises that the marriage was no longer the transition of the consort from her natal family to her husband's family, but the incorporation of her natal family into the hybrid of the imperial family and power hierarchies.

Furthermore, a crucial part of the structural change in the second and third stages were the steps of the liminal period of the rituals which corresponds to the transition. In the second stage the ancestral sacrifice was rescheduled to the liminal period and in the third stage the submission of the proof which had been the beginning of the liminal period was merged with the *ce*. Toward the end of the Hongwu reign, the symbols of state hierarchy such as the imperial ancestral shrine and the *ce* played an important role in the liminal period of the marriage rituals of the imperial princes, which indicates that the marriages of the imperial princes became more relevant to the state hierarchy than ever before. Thus although the rituals of interest appear to be a mixture of innovations and precedents, with the help of the concept of "rites of passage" my thesis reveals that the focus of the innovations of the Hongwu reign was set on the overall structure and the liminal period. The resulting modifications in the rites of passage for the marriage parties accompanied the historical events that changed the fates of the relevant parties during the reign.

SYMBOLS OF STATE HIERARCHY INJECTED BETWEEN THE MARRIAGE PARTIES

The marriage ritual as defined in the classics *Yili* and *Liji* was supposed to be the union of two families of equal status. Nevertheless the incorporation of symbols of state hierarchy into the marriage rituals had long existed in imperial China. As a matter of fact, the techniques for scaling the marriage rituals were essentially various ways of symbolising the state hierarchy. In the precedents techniques had been developed to distinguish between the marriage rituals of different classes including the designated steps for sections of the state hierarchy (the number of high/low end steps and middle steps), the varying arrangement of the same step (such as that of the ancestral sacrifice) and the organization of the basic sequences (including merging steps in basic sequences) in their marriage rituals. In the Hongwu reign the techniques for scaling the marriage rituals over classes to represent the state hierarchy were adapted for injecting the state hierarchy into the relations between the imperial princes and their in-laws. The injection of the state hierarchy was through the two latter types of techniques via different operations. In the case of the ancestral sacrifice it was developed in conjunction with the evolution in its venue(s) (imperial ancestral shrines), especially with the clear distinction between the inner and outer shrines and their incorporation in the grand sacrifices. The modified step then defined the marriage of an imperial prince as a connection of the inner and outer parts of the power structure that underlay the state hierarchy. The organization of the basic sequence resulting in the injection of the state hierarchy took place in two phases. The basic sequence of the marriage ritual was first abbreviated by the removal of the first steps. Then the new first step *nazheng* (submission of the proof) were merged with the *ce* (conferring) and the emperor's dispatch of the messengers that had been associated with the state

hierarchy. The resulting steps formally relegated the in-laws of the imperial princes as the recruits of the imperial family in the state hierarchy.

The symbols of state hierarchy employed in the above operations, the imperial ancestral shrine, the *ce* (conferment) and the dispatch of the messengers, all had provenance from the classics. In the rituals predating the Hongwu reign the meanings of the symbols had already been developed or converted in order to fit with the changing state structure resulting from the establishment of the emperorship. The ranking systems under the central governance of the emperor gradually replaced the system of aristocracy. In the development of the emperorship the positions of the imperial blood relatives in the state structure was a troublesome variable. The criteria of recognition of the imperial descendants as members of imperial clan shifted from period to period. The imperial princes as the immediate family of the emperor, often the potential threats of the throne, were even more difficult to be placed in the hierarchy of the state. The uses of the symbols of the state hierarchy in the marriage rituals for the imperial princes was directly influenced by their varying positions.

The imperial ancestral shrine was absent in the imperial princes' marriage rituals in the *Kaiyuan Li* of the Tang. When multiple imperial shrines were employed in the marriage rituals for the emperor and the heir apparent in the Song *Zhenghe Li* only one of them appeared for the princes. When it came to the Ming all of the imperial family members used the same imperial shrine from Hongwu 8 (1375) onwards (the inner shrine Fengxian Dian). The *ce* were granted to the imperial princes as well as to high ranked offices in the *Kaiyuan Li* of the Tang, whereas the two were both removed in the Song (*Zhenghe Li*) and the *ce* for the imperial princes was restored in the prescriptions from the Hongwu reign. The dispatch of the messengers was exclusive

to the marriages of the emperor and the heir apparent in the *Kaiyuan Li* (Tang) and *Zhenghe Li* (Song) whereas its use was extended to that for the imperial princes in all the prescriptions from the Hongwu reign. The evolution in the uses of these symbols indicate how the imperial princes were, as a group, placed at different positions in the state hierarchy in relation to the positions of other members of the state, especially the heir apparent and ranked officials.

The different trajectories of the use of three symbols suggest the different shades in the treatment of the imperial princes in regard to the notion of family and their positioning in the state hierarchy. For the use of the imperial ancestral shrine in the marriage ritual the imperial princes were continuously elevated from the Tang to the Hongwu reign. However the dispatch of the messengers was only made available to the imperial princes in the Hongwu reign. As for the *ce*, the princes were firstly downgraded in the *Zhenghe Li* and then elevated again in the Hongwu reign. Combining the use of the symbols, the Song *Zhenghe Li* emphasized the notion of the imperial family through the imperial ancestral shrine whereas their positions in the state hierarchy appear to be ambiguous. Meanwhile the conferment of the title of imperial princes was not guaranteed by their blood in the Song. The *Zhenghe Li* listed the classes as the princes (皇子) which only addressed their relation with the emperor by blood whereas the title of imperial prince was used in the Tang and Ming prescriptions. The arrangement of the symbols provokes a feeling of the isolation of the imperial family in the state hierarchy in the *Zhenghe Li*. This corresponded to the fact that the imperial blood within five degrees of mourning clothes were normally appointed official posts receiving privileges but without any political significance. In the Hongwu reign the imperial princes were fully elevated by the use of all the symbols as a result of the hybrid of the family and power hierarchy at the top of the state.

Since the power hierarchy in the Hongwu reign also affected the kin by marriages of the imperial family, the symbols of state hierarchy were utilised and renovated in the marriage rituals for imperial princes to convey the proper order between the affected parties who had roles in the family which potentially conflicted with their roles in the state. The “imperial prince” as a title exclusive to the imperial blood was installed above all those for the meritorious officials in the first stage. The designation of the inner and outer imperial ancestral shrines further distinguished between the imperial blood and others. Yet connection between the inner and outer sections in the hierarchy were made feasible through the marriages and symbolised by the modified ancestral sacrifice at the newly designated inner shrine in the rituals in the second stage. In the third stage the marriage was represented in the rituals as an outcome of the emperor’s decision instead of as the mutual agreement between two families so that the early negotiations were removed and the emperor played the determinant role in the *nazheng* (submission of the proof). Its later merger with the *ce* formally designated the in-laws of the imperial princes as recruits of the emperor. After the Hongwu reign this designation of the marital relationships of the imperial princes was then detached from the top of the power hierarchy. The business of the immediate family of the emperor was considered private and secluded from the public sphere when the imperial princes and their in-laws were restrained from power. The ancestral sacrifice at the inner shrine was in turn given a different meaning, as it became a process converting the connection to the private sphere. On the other hand the relegation of the in-laws of the imperial princes via the merged *ce* and *nazheng* remained appropriate. The idea of subordinating the in-laws of imperial princes was retained after the Hongwu reign though the imperial princes and their in-laws were both moved downwards in the power hierarchy, that is, from the top to the bottom of

the power hierarchy in terms of being forbidden to take any posts of political significance.

The symbolic vocabulary inherent in the rituals grew over time. The two branches of the vocabulary, the institutional rituals and the scholarly rituals, intertwined with each other.¹ The institutionalised rituals had the special component of symbols of the state hierarchy for its function of governance. Through tracing the symbols of the state hierarchy and their uses in the ritual classics and rituals of later dynasties it is revealed that their evolutions were associated with the development in the structure of the state. The rituals in the classics were formulated in the context of a different model of state organization, that of the Zhou dynasty. Through manipulating the symbols of state hierarchy the innovations in the strategies of governance were delivered in the rituals of each of the later periods. For modern researchers the symbols of the state hierarchy and their varying uses in the rituals are potential information sources for uncovering the changes in the strategies for state organization in different periods. This thesis presents a case study which sheds light on the methodological framework based on tracing the symbols of state hierarchy in institutionalised rituals. The next section will discuss the foundation of the methodological framework, and will address the assumption it is based on and potential future research that could enhance the approach.

¹ The scholarly rituals refer to the prescriptions that were produced without government sponsorship.

REFLECTION ON THE METHODOLOGY: FOUNDATION, OBSERVATIONS, ASSUMPTION AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This thesis links the symbols in the rituals directly to the sense of appropriateness of the compiler(s)/patron(s). It takes a view that no matter what intellectual background the rituals were based on, their uses of the symbols represented the sense of their appropriateness of the compiler or the patron or both. This is by no means to totally devaluate the importance of the relevant intellectual background and actually in this thesis intellectual developments were studied whenever they became relevant. However this thesis argues for a more general consideration of the change in the sense of appropriateness which includes the intellectual development as one of the factors instead of the only one. This opens up a more complete view of the formation of the rituals than entirely complying with whatever the intellectual background suggests. More factors could be recovered beyond the scope of intellectual developments. For example in the case of the institutionalised rituals the strong impact of the ideology of the state organization over the symbols of the state hierarchy is suggested.

This thesis examines the changes in the sense of appropriateness of the relationships between marriage parties in the different versions of the marriage rituals for imperial princes. It provides insight into the developments of the symbols and their uses, especially the symbols of the state hierarchy. It demonstrates that the vocabulary of the symbols was accumulative. The variations that were innovated in one period would in turn be the basis for innovation in the later periods. Therefore although the sense of the appropriateness of certain rituals changed from one period to another, the symbols and their uses to some extent could be considered to be progressively continuing. For example the distinction between inner and outer shrines symbolising the power hierarchy was unprecedented in the Hongwu reign, yet the

Fengxian Dian and Tai Miao in the Hongwu reign were under the influence of the Jingling Gong and Tai Miao in the Song dynasty. Similarly when the state structure was rearranged in the later reigns, the Fengxian Dian and Tai Miao were cleverly adapted to the new symbolic meanings of “private” and “public”.

The variations in the uses of the symbols involved nuanced differentiations in the context of the symbols. For example the *ce* developed from a noun referring to an edict that could abolish titles in the Han to a procedure for conferring titles latest from the Tang. The receiver of the *ce* changed from members of aristocracy in the classics, to the imperial family members as well as top ranked officials in the Tang. Ranked officials were moved from the list of receivers of the *ce* in the *Zhenghe Li* of the Song along with the princes. In the Ming the *ce* became exclusive to the imperial blood up to princes of the second degree (*junwang* 郡王) and their heirs. Later in the Qing it was extended to members of the imperial clan up to princes of the blood of the fourth degree *beizi* (*beile* prince 貝子) and their daughters (*xianjun* 縣君 district mistress).² The diversified uses of the symbols like *ce* were preserved and accumulated in the writings of rituals. Therefore the innovative uses of these symbols at a particular point of time were results of conscious decisions from the judgements of appropriateness at the time. The thesis is an attempt to approximate the change in the senses of appropriateness over history by tracing the nuanced variations in the context of the same symbol in the rituals from different periods.

The vocabulary of symbols for the marriage rituals for the imperial princes, was suspended in the Yuan when the marriage ceremonies followed the Mongolian

² *Da Qing tongli*, 27:331, 333.

tradition for the upper classes of the state. The Hongwu emperor developed a sense of appropriateness in which the reliance on the imperial blood in the power hierarchy and the attention to their marriages constituted an important feature of his ideal order. His remarks on forging rituals “in accordance to the time” and his ideal of “the governance of antiquity” presents his awareness that the rituals were tools rather than the equivalence of state order. Under his supervision, instead of passively accepting the precedents for marriage rituals, his government employed the rituals as tools for achieving the ideal state order, tailored to the demands of particular political situations at specific times. Retrospectively the state order developed by the Hongwu emperor with regard to the status of imperial princes and their marital relatives was short-lived whereas the innovations in the uses of the symbols developed to shape it were accumulated in the vocabulary and adapted in later prescriptions. The significance of the Hongwu reign for the ritual institution was that the reign resumed the use of the vocabulary of symbols for delivering updates to the state order that had been suspended during the Yuan.

So far, the methodological framework has not expanded beyond the scope of the institutionalised rituals. The symbols studied in this thesis were all those of state hierarchy that made up the special components of the institutionalised rituals. Thus the sense of appropriateness here was more about the structure and organization of the state hierarchy. While the perspective of the sense of the appropriateness is likely to be extendable to the study of scholarly rituals this thesis has concentrated on the findings in the field of institutionalised rituals. The sense of the appropriateness could be either conscious or unconscious for the compilers or the patrons of the rituals. For the institutional rituals which were normally collaboratively compiled by known or unknown hands it remains in question whether or not there was a consistent sense of

the appropriateness. To some extent this thesis is based on the assumption of the existence of a consensus about the worldly order at a very general level among all of the compilers and the patron(s). In particular it is unlikely that unprecedented innovations were the result of a decision by an individual compiler based on their own specific sentiment. The unprecedented innovations are likely to have represented an update of the sense of appropriateness from the general agreement of its compilers as well as its patron regardless of how the agreement was achieved. This assumption is supported by the cases studied in this research. Even in the special case, the *Mingjili*, where two different voices existed in the reviews and the actual prescriptions a general elevation of the imperial princes is still perceivable which resonated with the rankings in the titles granted at the time. The subsequent changes in the marriage rituals for imperial princes also converged with the changes in the real lives of relevant parties.

Authority over the ritual institution is normally seen as a sign of authority over other governmental business in imperial China. In the case of the Hongwu reign it was the emperor who was ultimately responsible for the relationships to be delivered in the rituals as well as to be exercised in the reality. Yet in his pursuit of the ideal order the emperor was not likely to have been involved in every single process of ritual making in person, but his will is likely to have been exercised through the changes in the rituals as well as in the other activities. An interesting follow up of this thesis is to adapt the approach developed in this thesis to compare the relations delivered in the rituals and exercised in reality under more complicated power relations to examine the roles of rituals in power competition in different periods.

Another direction for future research is to probe into the interactions between the rituals in writing and in practice. There are three formats for the rituals:

prescriptions, actual practices and written records of practices. The written records of practices inevitably employ textual symbols, hence appearing more “prescriptive” and deviating from the actual practices. Yet the innovations in the uses of the textual symbols were likely to have been under the influence of practical developments. Through the cases presented in the thesis it can be seen that the actual practice and the prescriptions of the rituals could have been mediated through the written records of the practice (such as from the record of Hongwu 8 [1375] practices to the Hongwu 26 [1393] prescriptions). The thesis also suggests a clear awareness of the difference in the three formats of the rituals. For modern researchers the actual practices can only be speculated about through the written records and occasionally through extant venues and artefacts. This is precisely because practices were designed to be temporal events for a limited and specific audiences. A practice would only be recorded for future reference if it had some sort of significance at a particular time point. The prescriptions were made in a more generalised tone with their targets clearly defined as contemporary and subsequent generations of readers. Therefore we should challenge the view that tends to deny the value of rituals as text whenever they deviated from practices.

The differentiation between the formats of the rituals also enhances a reflection on the anthropological concept of “rite of passage” employed by this thesis as a starting point for examining the relationships involved in the marriage rituals. Within the scope of this thesis the rite of passage as an analytical tool provided some important assistance in analysing the rituals of interest, but was not without its limitations. One reason is that the tool was originally developed from the observations of performance and deviated from our cases that were presented in the written form. Besides the above difference, the complexity of Ming Chinese society with conflicting multiple

hierarchies was also beyond the consideration of the original framework of the rite of passage. Therefore the combination of a semiotic approach as well as the further refinement of the structural analysis would be more suitable solutions for interpreting the rite of passage presented in the written form in Chinese tradition. This thesis sheds some light on the treatments of the conflicting hierarchies in the rituals of interest which could lead to the further improvement of the structural analysis of the rite of passage. The more significant achievement of this thesis is the progress it makes in our understanding of the textual symbols in the written rituals. The deconstruction of the rituals into symbols transformed the basic unit for research. The linking and comparison of practices, records and prescriptions were transferred from the units of rituals to that of their constituent symbols. This enabled a more thorough exploitation of the available materials on the same symbols but in different rituals. Furthermore it could help to recognize the patterns of co-developments in the different rituals involving the same symbols. Although this thesis only deals with the marriage ritual as a rite of passage, the analysis of symbols it develops is applicable to the study of a wide range of rituals in writing.

In sum, through the case study of the marriage rituals for the imperial princes in the Hongwu reign this thesis makes a number of contributions. First of all, a deeper understanding that during the reign the changes in the symbolic passages provided by the rituals of interest to the parties involved in the marriages of the imperial princes did tally with the treatment to them in the political sphere. Secondly, a clearer insight into the development of the symbols of state hierarchy and their relevance to the evolutions in the state organization. Finally and most importantly the proposal of a methodological framework to interpret the messages conveyed in the changes in rituals based on analysing the revised symbols at the textual, ritual and historical levels.

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Appendix

Table A-1 Conversion Table of Years of the Hongwu Reign to Gregorian Calendar

Hongwu 1	1368
Hongwu 2	1369
Hongwu 3	1370
Hongwu 4	1371
Hongwu 5	1372
Hongwu 6	1373
Hongwu 7	1374
Hongwu 8	1375
Hongwu 9	1376
Hongwu 10	1377
Hongwu 11	1378
Hongwu 12	1379
Hongwu 13	1380
Hongwu 14	1381
Hongwu 15	1382
Hongwu 16	1383
Hongwu 17	1384
Hongwu 18	1385
Hongwu 19	1386
Hongwu 20	1387
Hongwu 21	1388
Hongwu 22	1389
Hongwu 23	1390
Hongwu 24	1391
Hongwu 25	1392
Hongwu 26	1393
Hongwu 27	1394
Hongwu 28	1395
Hongwu 29	1396
Hongwu 30	1397
Hongwu 31	1398